
HotCakes
Presents
Copernicus' Breath
Volume 1
Ch-0
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Copernicus' Breath Notes

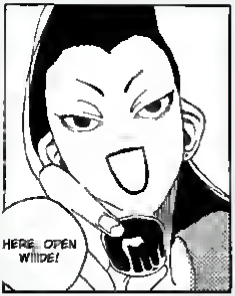
Chapter 0



Page 1: There seem to be some mix-ups in the original text, but there were enough correct parts to glean this much. 1: ANDAC is not a real group. ANSAC (National Association for the Development of the Circus Arts) is a group with a similar sounding name and goals, but it appears to be Italian. 2: Jack Lang DID establish a circus-related group, CNAC, but it was in 1986 rather than 1988. I couldn't find any evidence of the speech itself but that would be an old and obscure thing, so it's not surprising.



Page 6: Seems like it was written by Morita Yuuko in her book Circus – Soko ni Iru Hitobito... HEY! How did this French woman in the '70s know a quote from a Japanese book published in 1995? This Morita character had better have translated some other, older quote and passed it off as her own. *Shakes fist* Haha.



Page 10: "Maison du Chocolat!" - A French chocolatier whose first shop was... ahem... opened in 1977. XD

コペルニクスの呼吸

La respiration de Copernic

中村明日美子

1



Asumiko Nakamura

F×COMICS

大田出版

コペルニクスの呼吸 1

中村明日美子

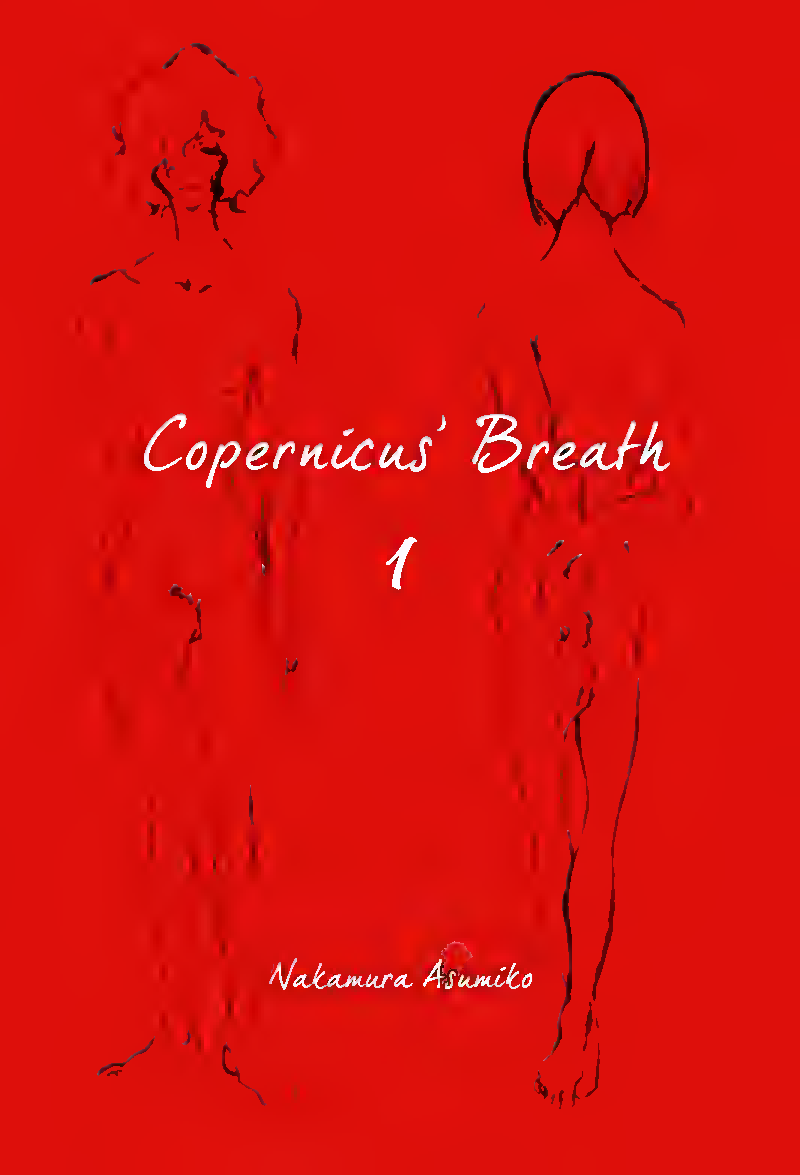
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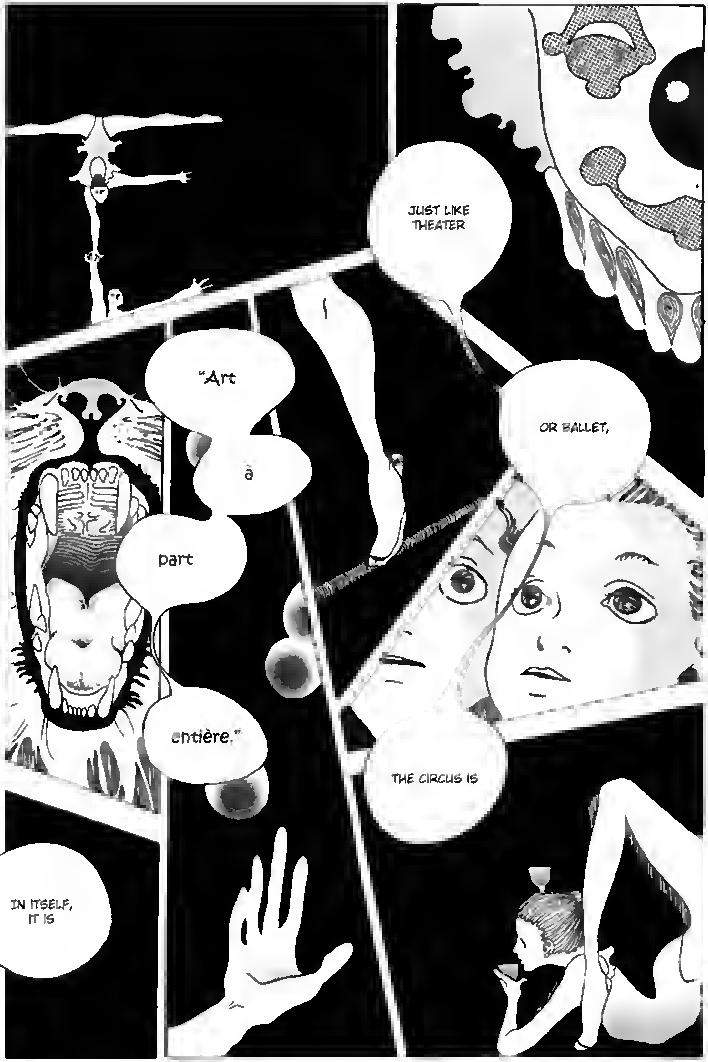
La respiration de Copernic



Copernicus' Breath

1

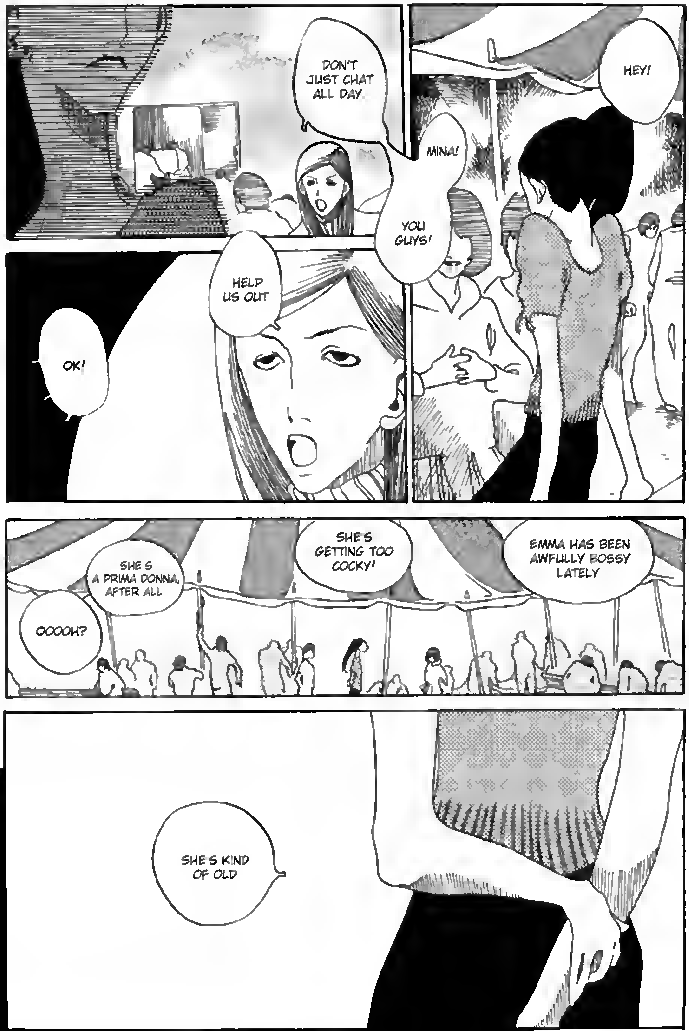
Nakamura Asumiko



Side Note. From French Minister of Culture, Jack Lang, at the inauguration of CNAC (The National Center for Circus Arts) in 1986.


Art is
AN ART,
part
ALL,
entire
IT'S OWN.
0


DIONG
DIONG
DIONG
Paris - Early 1970s
DIONG
IT'S A CIRCUS
La CIRQUE le SOIR
YEAH.
WHAT?
DIONG
DIONG
DIONG
OOOH?
DIONG


DON'T JUST CHAT ALL DAY
MINA!
YOU GUYS!
HEY!
HELP US OUT
OK!
SHE'S GETTING TOO COCKY!
EMMA HAS BEEN AWFULLY BOSSY LATELY
SHE'S A PRIMA DONNA, AFTER ALL
OOOOH?
SHE'S KIND OF OLD


TO BE CALLED A PRIMA DONNA.
BY NO MEANS
DID I LEAD A HAPPY LIFE.
NOR AM I CURRENTLY
UNHAPPY
BY NO MEANS.

Check the notes page






ABOUT THAT GUY...
YEAH
I GUESS
THE RING-MASTER BROUGHT HIM IN
THE CIRCUS HE WAS IN PREVIOUSLY WENT UNDER OR SOMETHING
I THINK HIS NAME WAS... LEO?
SAY...
AAAH, I'M HUNGRY!
GIVE ME SOME, TOO!
MEAT! WHERE'S THE MEAT?!
I TOLD YOU YOU'VE GOT SOME
HMMM
I'VE SEEN HIM JUGGLE
WAS HE GOOD?
WELL...
HE WAS GOOD, BUT...
HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS?


I'M NO STREET PERFORMER
IT FELT SOULLESS
I DON'T LIVE
DAY TO DAY
RELYING ON TOSSED COINS...


I DON'T REMEMBER WHEN I FIRST JUGGLED
AT THAT TIME, I SNUCK INTO THE CIRCUS
NOW I'VE BEEN IN THE CIRCUS FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS
I
AM A CIRCUS ARTIST

Check the notes page.




A CIRCUS MUST BE A CIRCUS
IT MUST NOT BECOME PERFORMANCE ART.
THEATER SHOULD BE THEATER
OPERA SHOULD BE OPERA.
THE RING-MASTER IS SERIOUSLY STINGY.


I WHO WAS BORN AND RAISED IN A CIRCUS
CAME TO HAVE MY OWN TENT BEFORE I KNEW IT.
THERE ARE MANY CIRCUS TROUPES THAT HAVE FAILED.
BUT DESPITE THAT, I BELIEVE MY CIRCUS WILL CONTINUE ON.


JUST AS BALLET IS BALLET
A CIRCUS IS A CIRCUS


BIRD'S NEST!
YOU DIDN'T EAT ANY CHOCOLATE EARLIER, DID YOU?
snicker
snicker
HERE. OPEN WIIIDE!


munch
HOW LAAAME
WHAT, YOU DON'T HAVE A MOUTH?
HE'S A CLOWN, AFTER ALL
YOU'LL ALWAYS SCREWING WITH HIM, MINA!
snicker
snicker
WHAT A NOISY BUNCH OF GIRLS


.....
YOUR SLEEVE HAS FALLEN
THANKS
T-


IS IT YOUR TURN TODAY TO WASH THE DISHES?
NO, NOT A "TURN"
I'M THE CLOWN, SO ...
IT'S MY DAILY TASK
...?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
CIRCUS REVOLU-TIONS
ARE ALWAYS
EVEN VALEN-TINE.
LAZARENKO, ENGIBAROV,


LEAD BY CLOWNS
WELL
I'M SURE YOU'VE GOT THOUGHTS OF YOUR OWN
...
THOUGHTS?


HA...!
COPERNICUS BREATHES


THE BRAVE FOOL WHO ADVANCED THE MOVEMENT OF THE EARTH
DEVELOPED A MAGNIFICENT IDEA,
WAS REGARDED AS INSANE,
AND THEN DIED.


THE RHYTHM OF COPERNICUS' BREATH
TURNS THE WORM-EATEN TEXT INTO A CHEERFUL ONE.
TWIN.
TWIN.
THE STARS TURN
COPERNICUS BREATHES.


I FLY.
IN ACCORDANCE WITH COPERNICUS' BREATH.
I FLY FREELY
THROUGH COPERNICUS' STARLIT SKY.
EVENTUALLY, I BREAK OFF FROM THE SWING,
AND BECOME A CONSTEL-LATION.


I BECOME COPERNICUS CONSTELL-TION
CLOMP


Journal
Michel
THOUGHTS...



[End of Chapter 0]

Notes Page
Ch-1

Page 33, panel 5:
Circus of the Night
The less Canadian cousin of Cirque du Soleil, perhaps?

Page 36, panel 1:
Lautrec is a 19th century French painter **Sotheby's** is an internationally operated auction house that largely deals in art and antiques





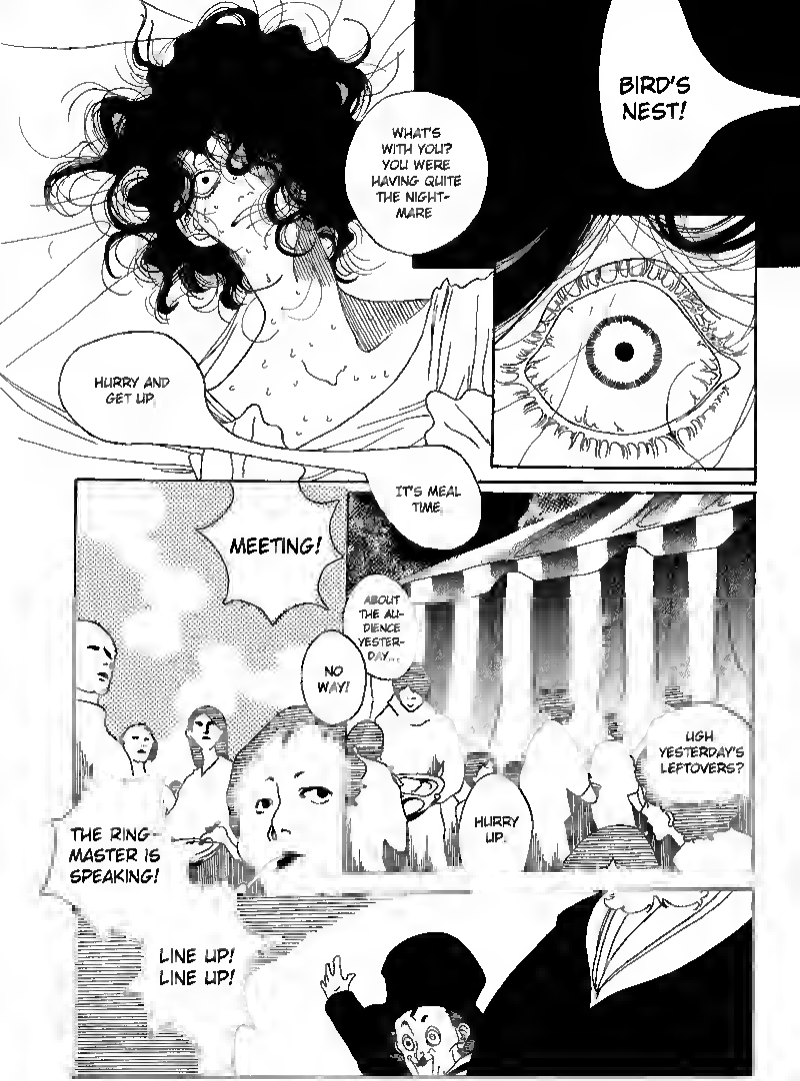
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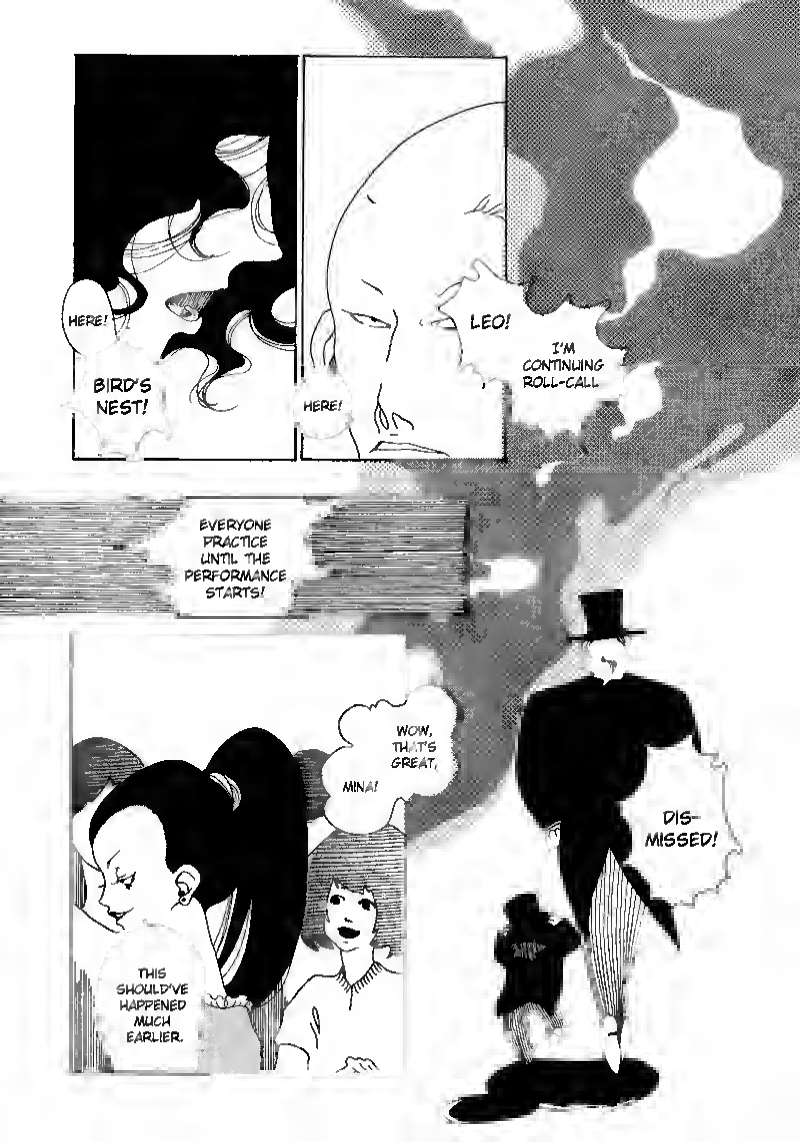
ASH...



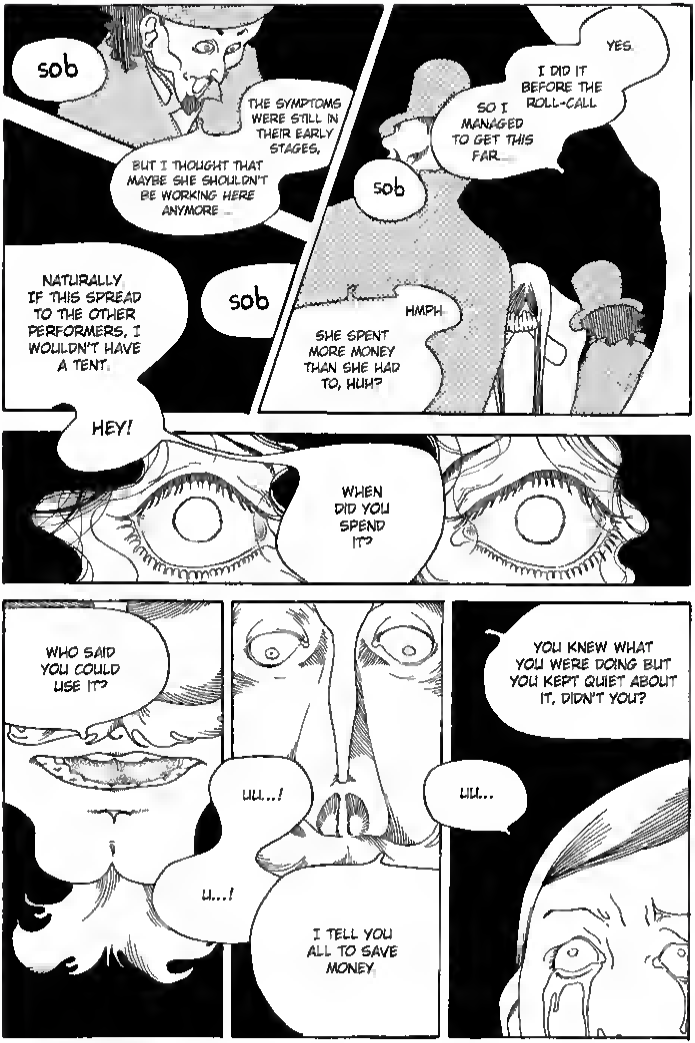
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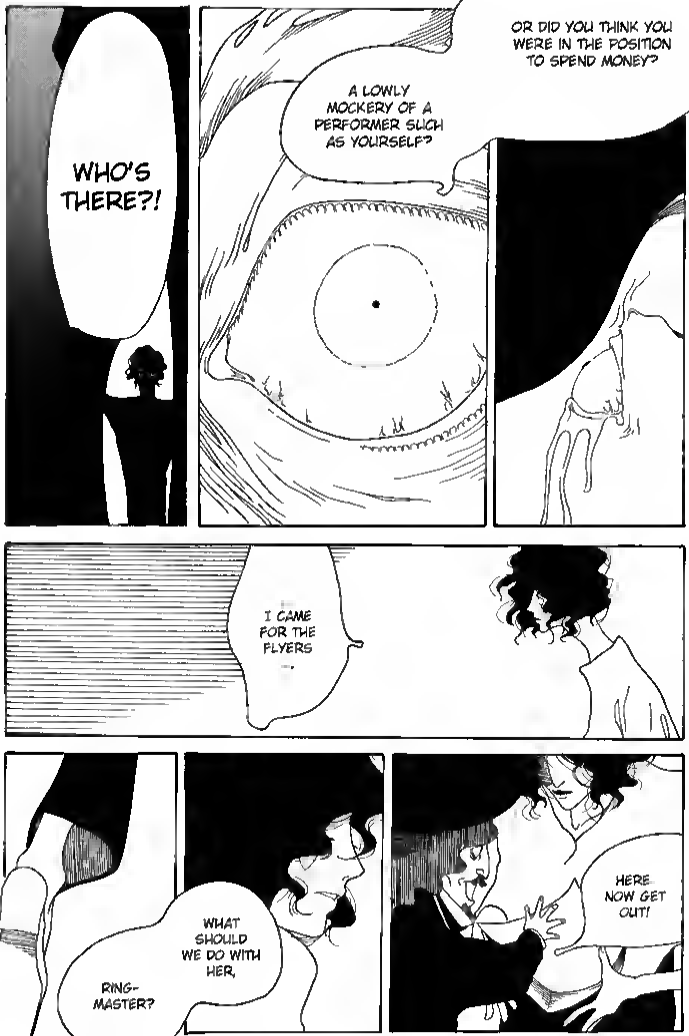

BIRD'S NEST!
WHAT'S WITH YOU? YOU WERE HAVING QUITE THE NIGHT-MARE
HURRY AND GET UP.
IT'S MEAL TIME.
MEETING!
ABOUT THE AU-DIENCE YESTER-DAY...
NO WAY!
HIGH YESTERDAY'S LEFTOVERS?
HURRY UP.
THE RING-MASTER IS SPEAKING!
LINE UP! LINE UP!


I WILL NOW BEGIN ROLL-CALL
CEP!
HERE!
HERE!
MAO!
CHIRO!
HERE!
EMMA!
MOR-NING, MY FRIENDS.
WHERE'S EMMA?!
EMMA!
RING-MASTER.
whis-per
whis-per
HMM...
CONGRATULA-TIONS. STARTING TODAY, YOU'RE THE LEAD PER-FORMER!
EH?
REALLY?!
FINE! MINA!


HERE!
BIRD'S NEST!
HERE!
LEO!
I'M CONTINUING ROLL-CALL
EVERYONE PRACTICE UNTIL THE PERFORMANCE STARTS!
WOW, THAT'S GREAT, MINA!
THIS SHOULD'VE HAPPENED MUCH EARLIER.
DIS-MISSED!

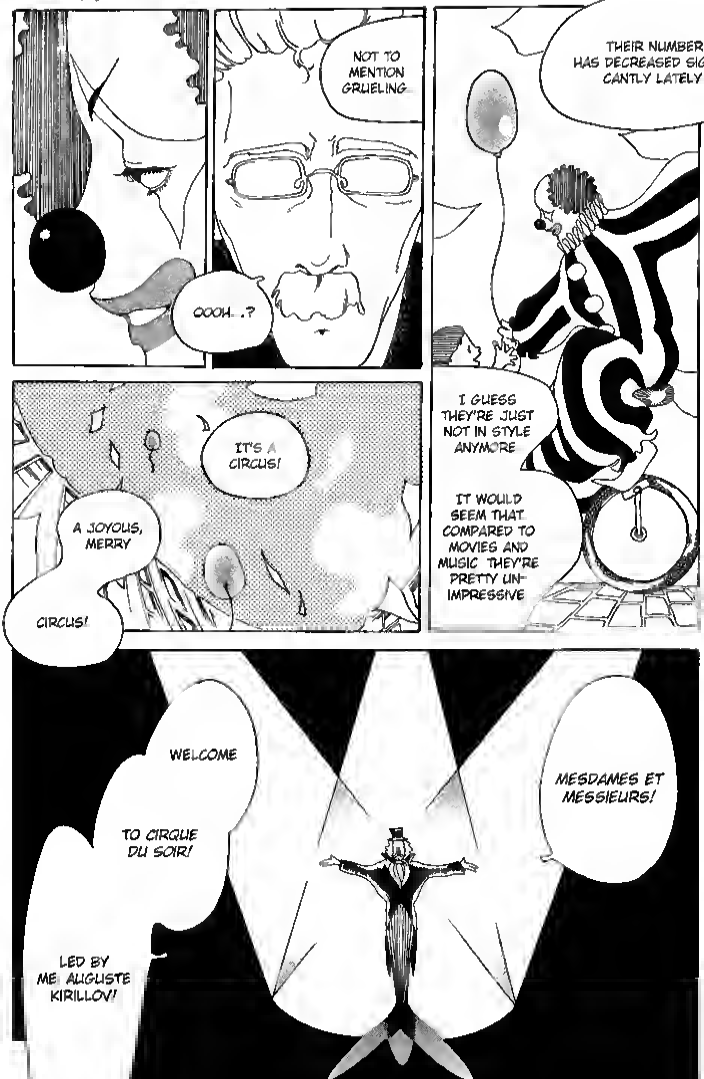

ARE YOU STARING AT?
WHAT
I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE EMMA FLAUNTING HER POSITION AROUND FOREVER
IT'S ABOUT TIME WE HAD A GENERATIONAL SHIFT AROUND HERE
EMMA'S GETTING TOO DAMN OLD
EVEN THOUGH SHE CAN DO A DOUBLE FLIP,
ATTENDANCE IS FALLING, TOO
CLOWNS SHOULD BE HANDING OUT FLYERS
GET OUT OF HERE,
YOU RETARD!
OW, HARSH!
AH HAHA!
SO?
DID YOU TAKE CARE OF THINGS?

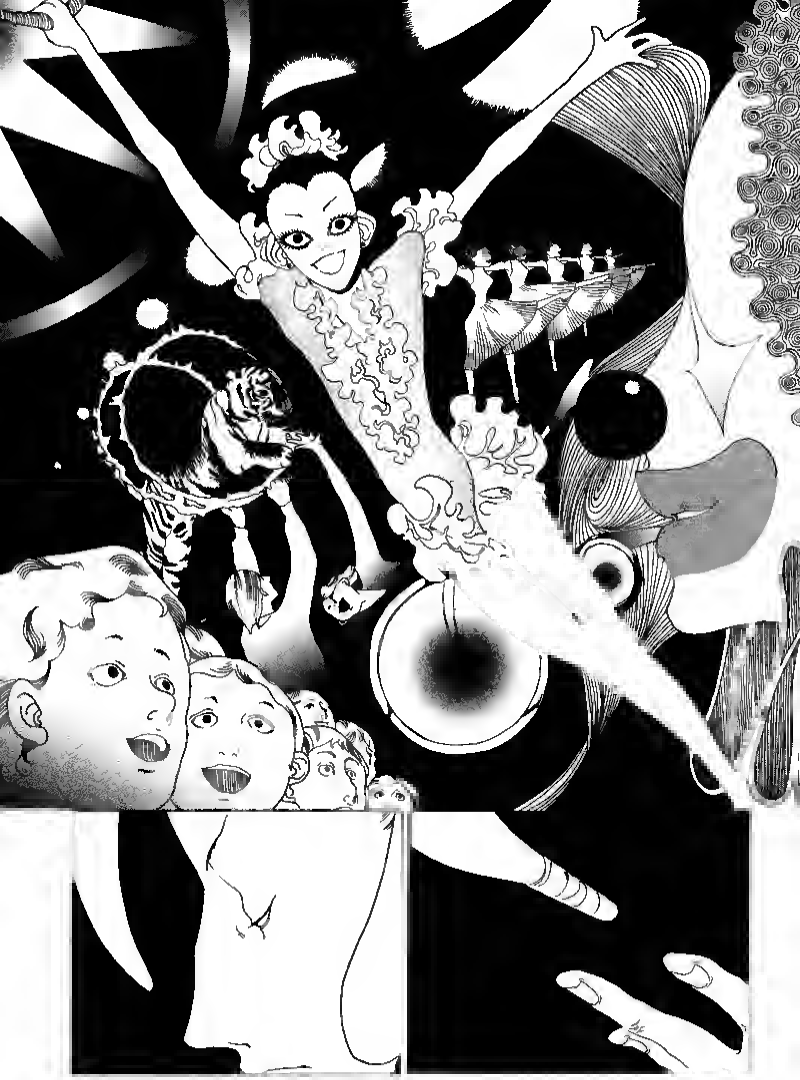

sob
THE SYMPTOMS WERE STILL IN THEIR EARLY STAGES,
BUT I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE SHE SHOULDN'T BE WORKING HERE ANYMORE...
NATURALLY IF THIS SPREAD TO THE OTHER PERFORMERS, I WOULDN'T HAVE A TENT.
sob
YES.
I DID IT BEFORE THE ROLL-CALL
SO I MANAGED TO GET THIS FAR...
sob
HMPH
SHE SPENT MORE MONEY THAN SHE HAD TO, HUH?
HEY!
WHEN DID YOU SPEND IT?
WHO SAID YOU COULD USE IT?
UUU...!
U...!
I TELL YOU ALL TO SAVE MONEY.
YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE DOING BUT YOU KEPT QUIET ABOUT IT, DIDN'T YOU?
UU...

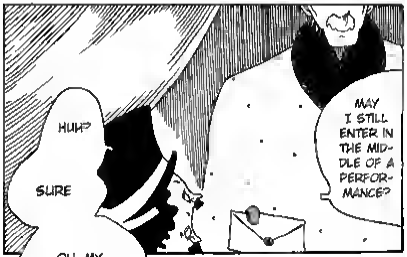

WHO'S THERE?!
A LOWLY MOCKERY OF A PERFORMER SUCH AS YOURSELF?
OR DID YOU THINK YOU WERE IN THE POSITION TO SPEND MONEY?
I CAME FOR THE FLYERS
HERE NOW GET OUT!
WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH HER, RING-MASTER?


TAKE TWO OR THREE MEN
AND DISPOSE OF HER.
DOO DO-DO DOOOO
DAH DA-DA DAAAH
THE CIRCUS IS HERE!
IT'S A CIRCUS!
I SEE
A CIRCUS?
I SAW THEM QUITE A BIT AS A CHILD, BUT...
THAT'S IT

*See notes page

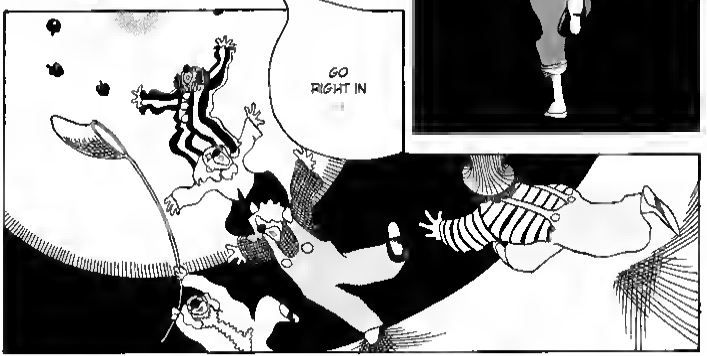





MAY I STILL ENTER IN THE MIDDLE OF A PERFORMANCE?
SURE
HUH?


OH, MY, THIS IS SOMETHING!
VIP INVITATION
MAKOTO ONAG



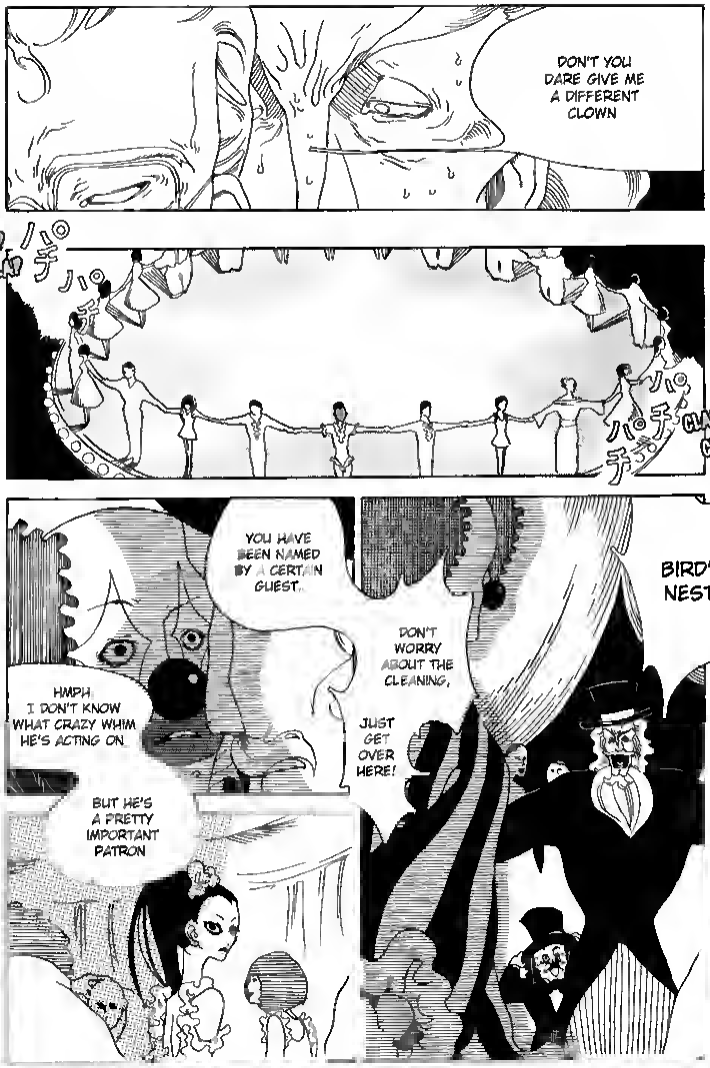

GO RIGHT IN


THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED PATRONAGE.

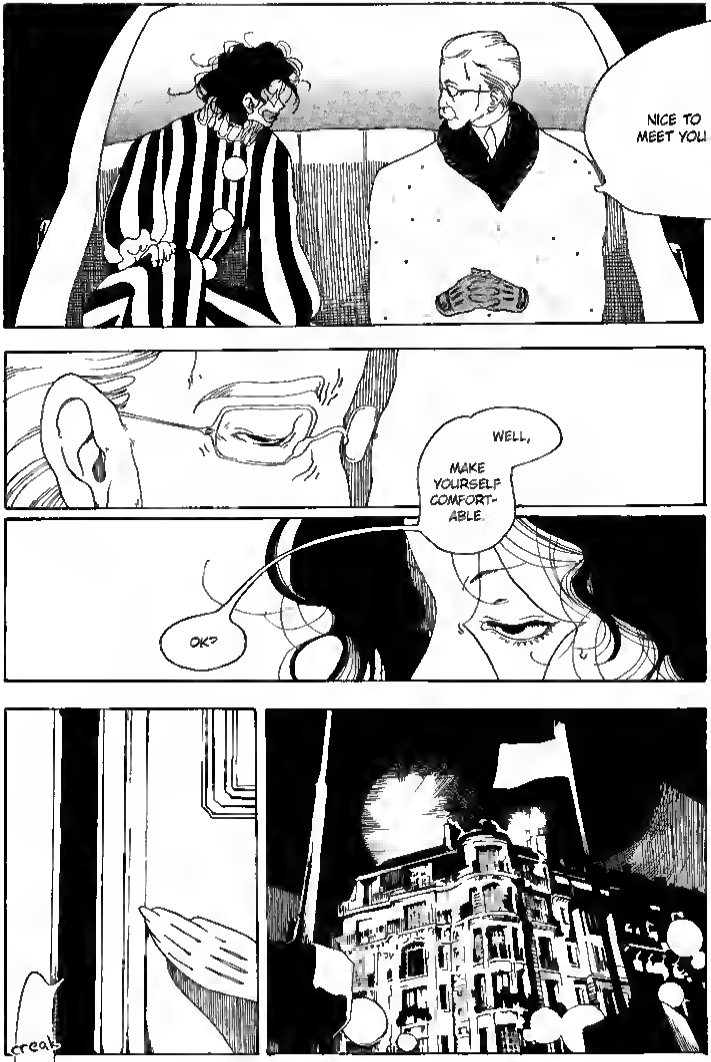
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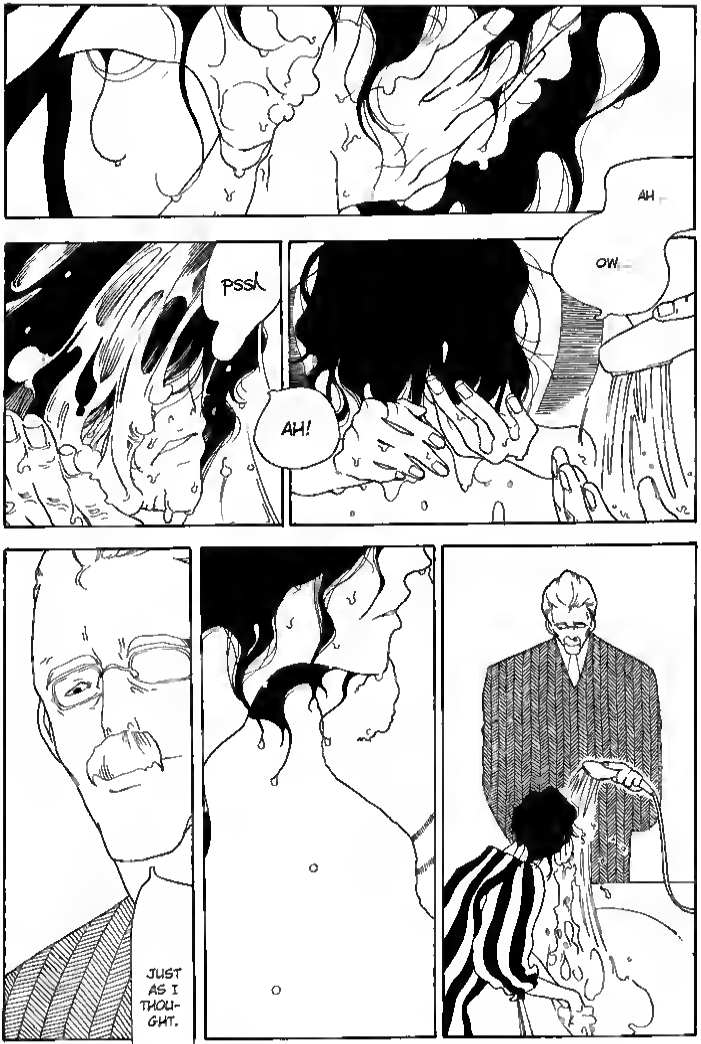

Dasy
Marina
La rose pierrot
HUH?
BY CLOWN, DO YOU MEAN THAT CLOWN?
YES. THE RED ONE
B-BUT SIR!
THAT ONE IS A COMPLETE AMATEUR IN THIS PART OF THE JOB
THIS IS A SPECIAL ORDER.
MAKE A LITTLE CONCESSION FOR ME.
WILL THIS BE ENOUGH?
!
I WILL SEND HIM OVER ONCE THE SHOW IS DONE YOU SEE.
U... UNDERSTOOD
NOW IF YOU DON'T MIND, MAY I ASK FOR YOUR PLACE OF RESIDENCE?
NO. I WILL COLLECT HIM MYSELF.


DON'T YOU DARE GIVE ME A DIFFERENT CLOWN
CLAP CLAP
CLAP CLAP
YOU HAVE BEEN NAMED BY A CERTAIN GUEST.
HMPH. I DON'T KNOW WHAT CRAZY WHIM HE'S ACTING ON.
BUT HE'S A PRETTY IMPORTANT PATRON
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE CLEANING.
JUST GET OVER HERE!
BIRD'S NEST!


WORK HARD.
YOU'D BETTER NOT MESS THIS UP. UNDERSTAND?
RING-MASTER
IS HE READY?
YES! I'LL SEND HIM RIGHT OUT!
open
GET IN

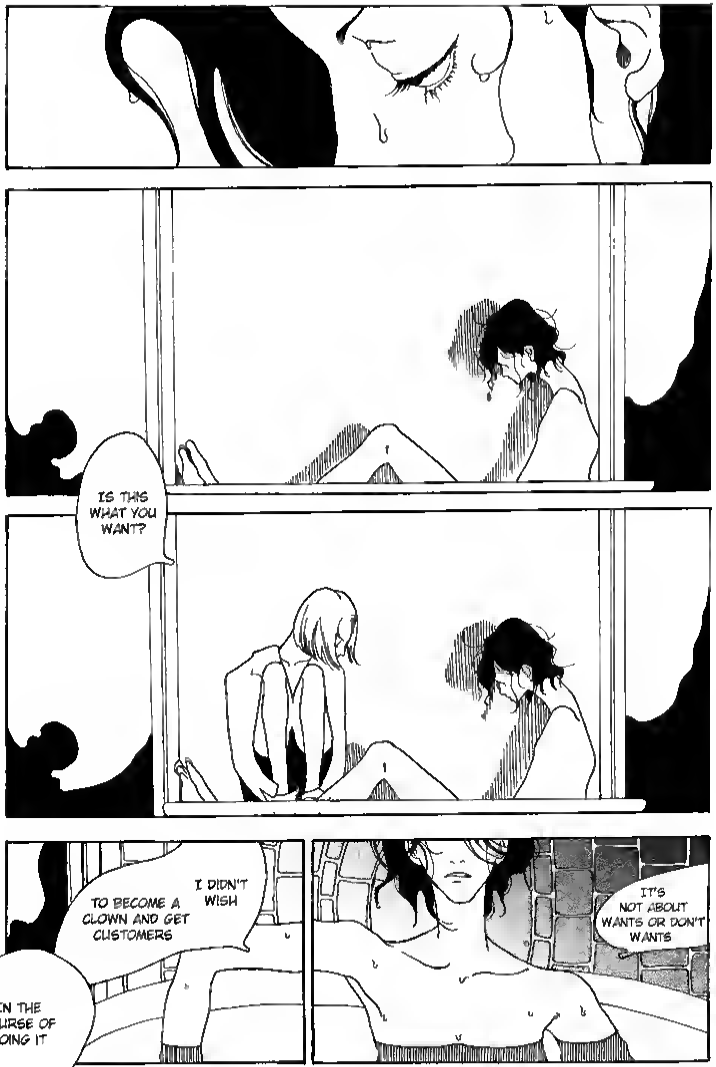

NICE TO MEET YOU.
WELL, MAKE YOURSELF COMFORT-ABLE.
OK?
creak

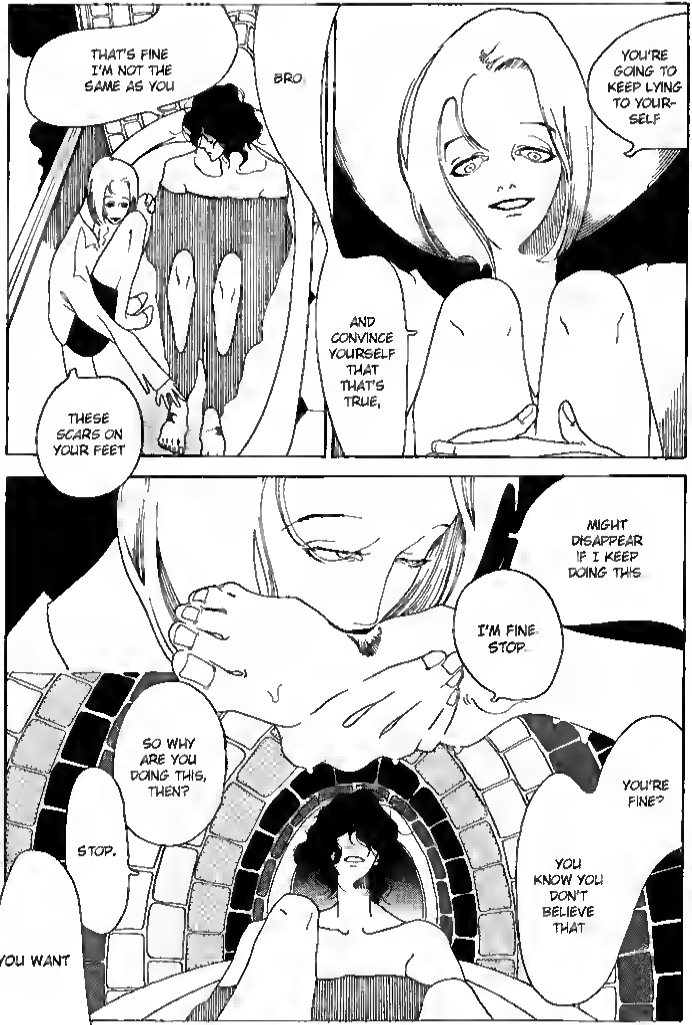

START BY REMOVING YOUR MAKEUP
WASH YOUR FACE WITH THIS ONE
YOU CAN'T WASH YOUR FACE WITH IT
YOU WASH YOUR HANDS WITH THAT


AH...
OW...
PSSH
AH!
JUST AS I THOU-GHT.


THAT RING-MASTER DID A GOOD JOB OF HIDING YOU
REMOVE YOUR CLO-THING


HMPH.
I SEE.
NOW GO TAKE A BATH
I'LL LEAVE OUT A CHANGE OF CLOTHES.


IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT?
I DIDN'T WISH TO BECOME A CLOWN AND GET CUSTOMERS IN THE COURSE OF DOING IT
IT'S NOT ABOUT WANTS OR DON'T WANTS

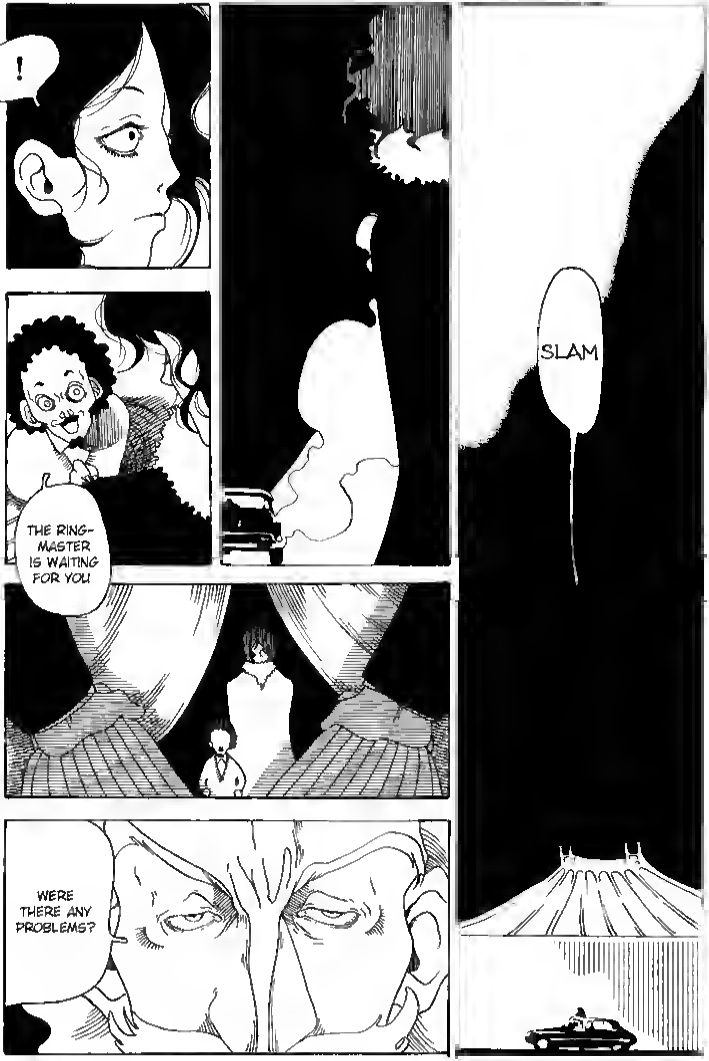

THAT'S FINE I'M NOT THE SAME AS YOU
BRO.
YOU'RE GOING TO KEEP LYING TO YOURSELF
AND CONVINCE YOURSELF THAT THAT'S TRUE,
THESE SCARS ON YOUR FEET
MIGHT DISAPPEAR IF I KEEP DOING THIS
I'M FINE STOP.
SO WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS, THEN?
YOU'RE FINE?
STOP.
YOU KNOW YOU DON'T BELIEVE THAT
YOU WANT


DEATH-
YOU'RE WRONG!
AAH,
IT REALLY SUITS YOU
WELL, COME AND EAT


YOU GET HUNGRY AFTER WORK, DON'T YOU?
IT'S JUST
I NEVER END UP DOING THIS PART OF THE JOB
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
UM
I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD DO ALL THIS FOR ME.
AH, YES
WELL, FORGET ALL THAT AND EAT
IT WON'T TASTE GOOD IF IT GETS COLD.


THIS IS HOW YOU HOLD A KNIFE
YES
CLINK
THERE'S NOTHING TO BE EMBARRASSED ABOUT
YOU'RE SHAKING

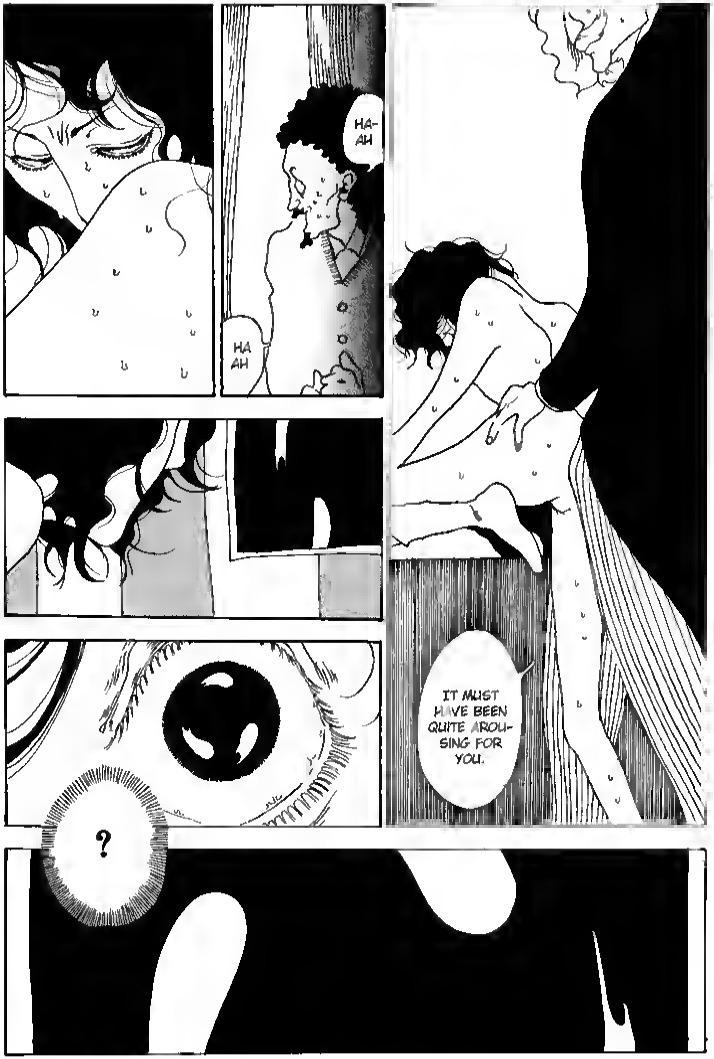

YOU'RE CALLED BIRD'S NEST, AREN'T YOU?
PERHAPS IT'S DUE TO THAT FRIZZY HAIR OF YOURS
WHAT'S YOUR REAL NAME?
I WANT TO HEAR YOUR STORY


!
SLAM
THE RING-MASTER IS WAITING FOR YOU
WERE THERE ANY PROBLEMS?


HEY. BRING ME SOME BRANDY.
YES, SIR.
YES
YOU DID WELL. VERY WELL
THIS IS FOR YOU, RINGMASTER. .
WHO-OSH
YOU WAIT OUT-SIDE
HMPH
HE PUT COLOGNE ON YOU.

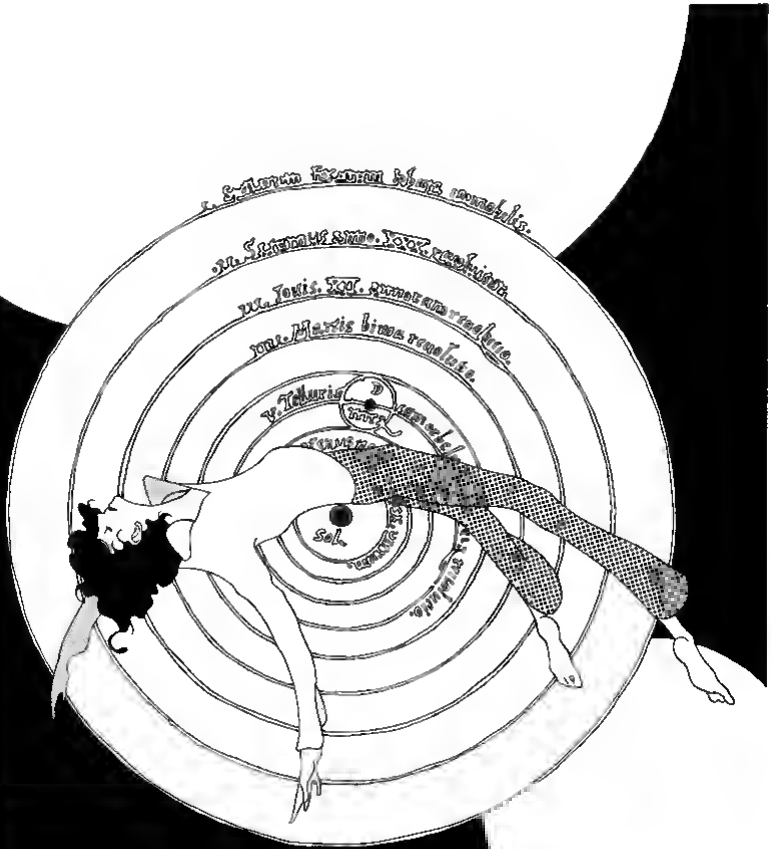

THAT MAN'S NAME IS MAKOTO OONAGI
HE'S ALWAYS HAD A THING FOR YOUNG BOYS THAT CAN'T EVEN GROW HAIR YET
HE'S A JAPANESE DIPLOMAT
WHY THE HELL DID HE PICK SOMEONE AS MATURE AS YOURSELF AGAIN?


I WON'T HAVE SEX WITH YOU RIGHT AWAY
I THINK I'LL PURCHASE YOU AFTER EVERY PERFORMANCE
HOW DOES IT FEEL
TO BE SOLD OFF BY THE MAN YOU'RE MOST INTIMATE WITH ..?
I...
IF YOU COME TO LIKE ME,
HOW DID IT FEEL TO BE FUCKED BY SOMEONE ELSE?
I WILL HAVE SEX WITH YOU THEN
AH!

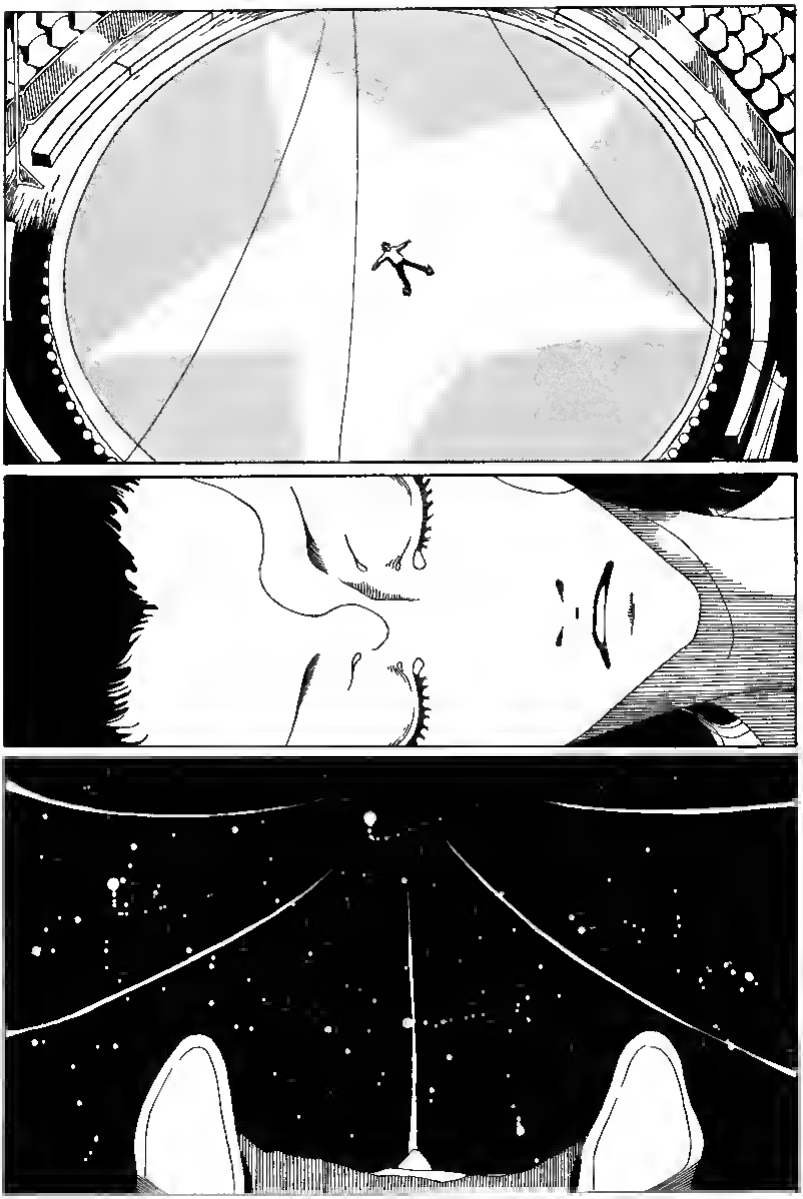

HA-AH
HA AH
IT MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE AROUSING FOR YOU.
?



[End of Chapter 1]



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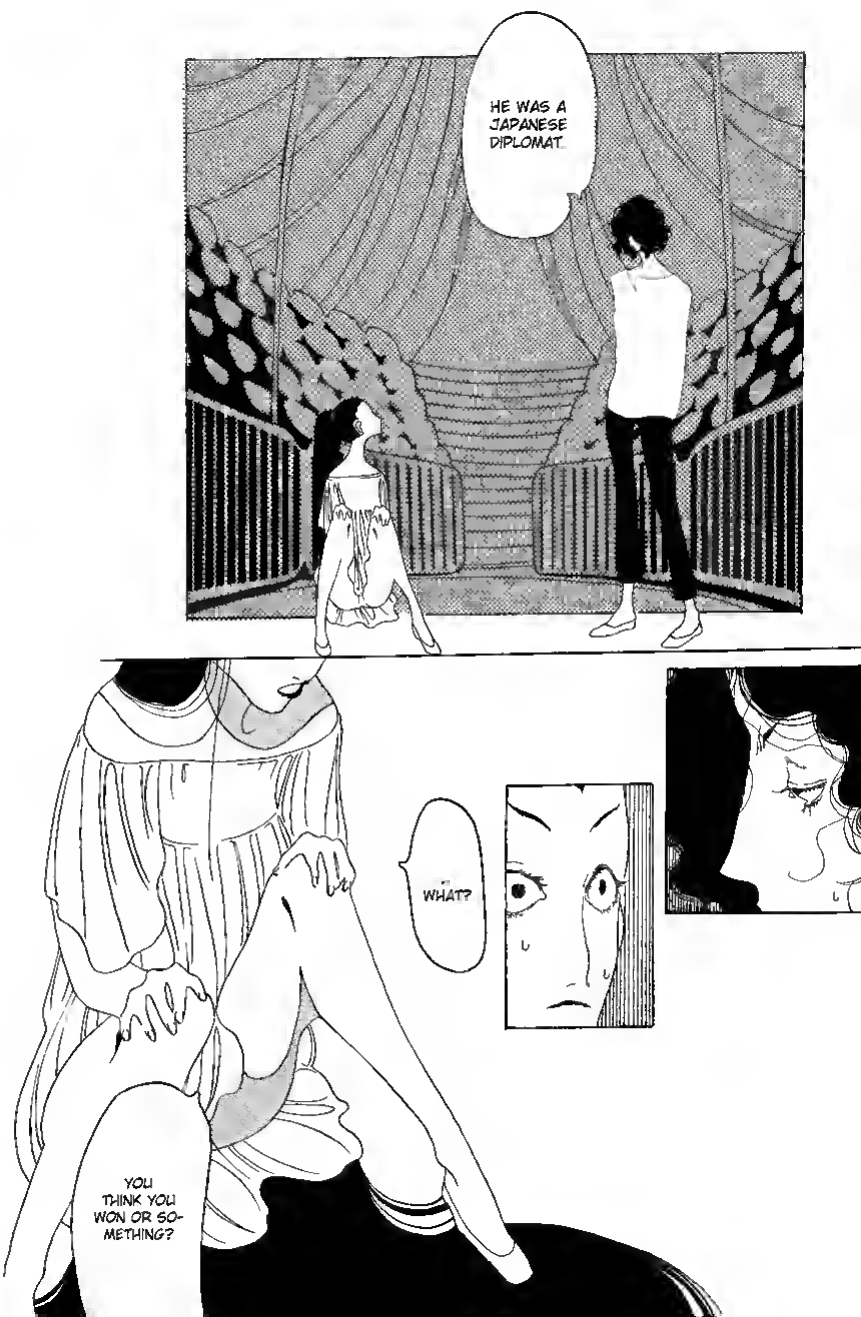



WHAT?

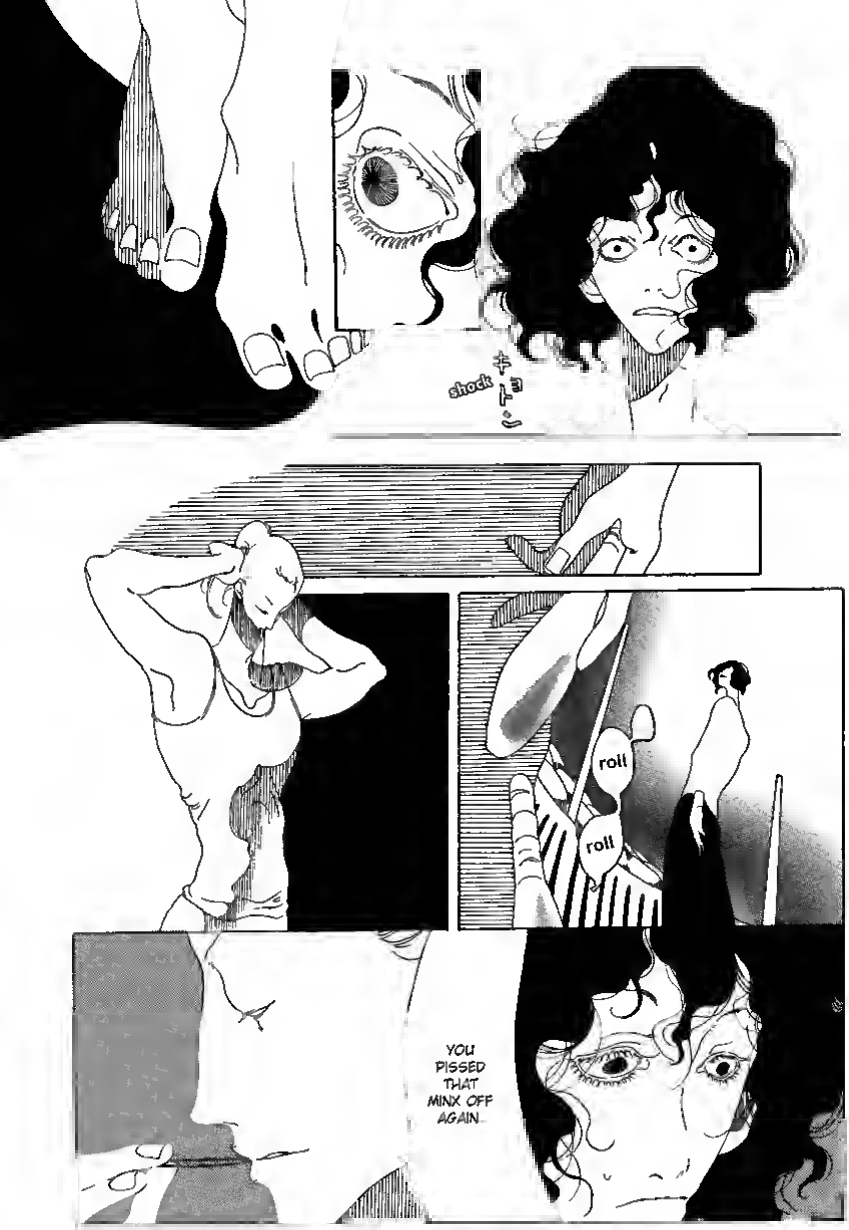

I'M EX-HAUSTED
I HAD TWO CUSTOMERS LAST NIGHT.
THINGS CHANGE WHEN YOU'RE THE LEAD PERFORMER.
YOU GONNA TELL THE RINGMAS-TER?
YOU
YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH THE RINGMASTER, AREN'T YOU?


I KNEW IT
IT'S ONLY NATURAL
NO ONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD PAY TO SLEEP WITH A CLOWN.
YOU'RE MERELY THE RING-MASTER'S PLAYTHING, AT BEST.
I GOT A CUSTOMER YESTERDAY.


YOU'RE KIDDING.
YOU MUST'VE BEEN SOLD FOR DIRT CHEAP.


HE WAS A JAPANESE DIPLOMAT.
WHAT?
YOU THINK YOU WON OR SOMETHING?


YOU MAY BE A CLOWN, BUT YOU'RE NOT STUPID!
SELLING YOUR BODY IS NOTHING TO BRAG ABOUT!


shock
キュン
roll
roll
YOU PISSED THAT MINX OFF AGAIN...


SORRY.
MADE IT HARD FOR ME TO COME OUT
YOU SHOULD LIMBER UP TOO.
IT'S ALMOST

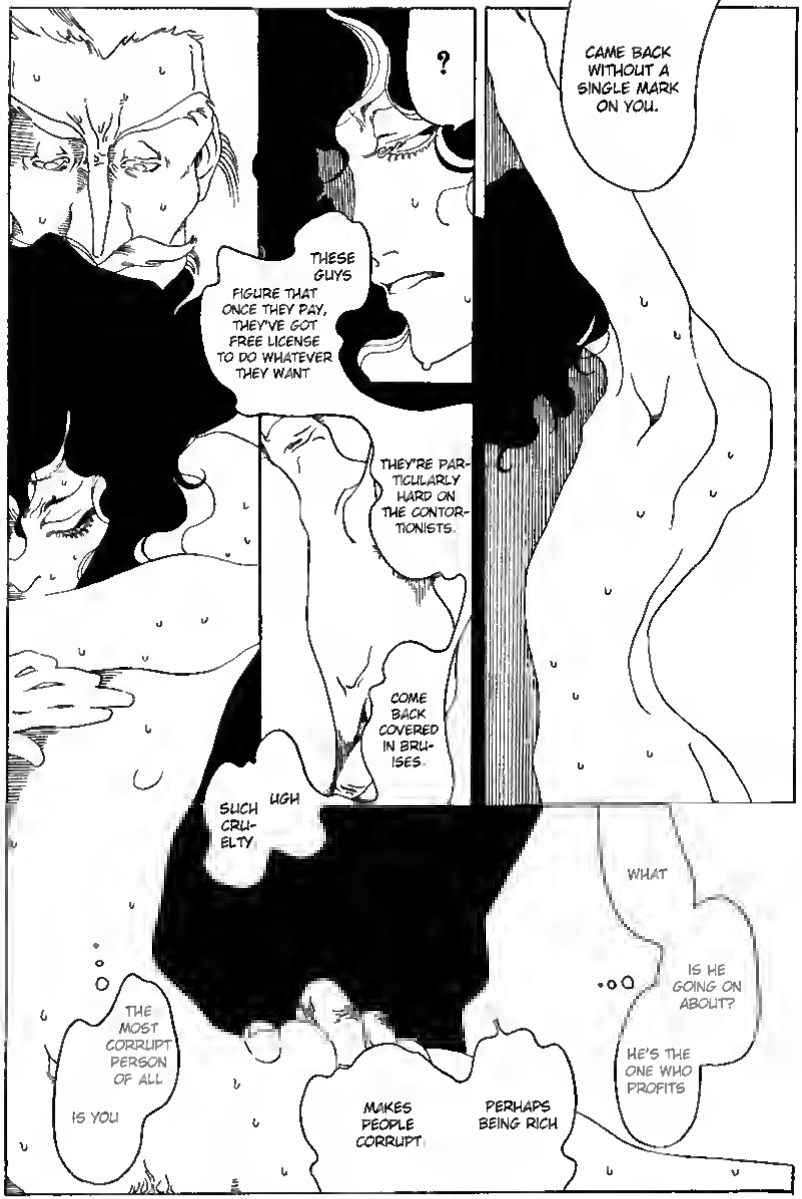

TIME TO START THE PERFOR-MANCE
AND BEFORE?

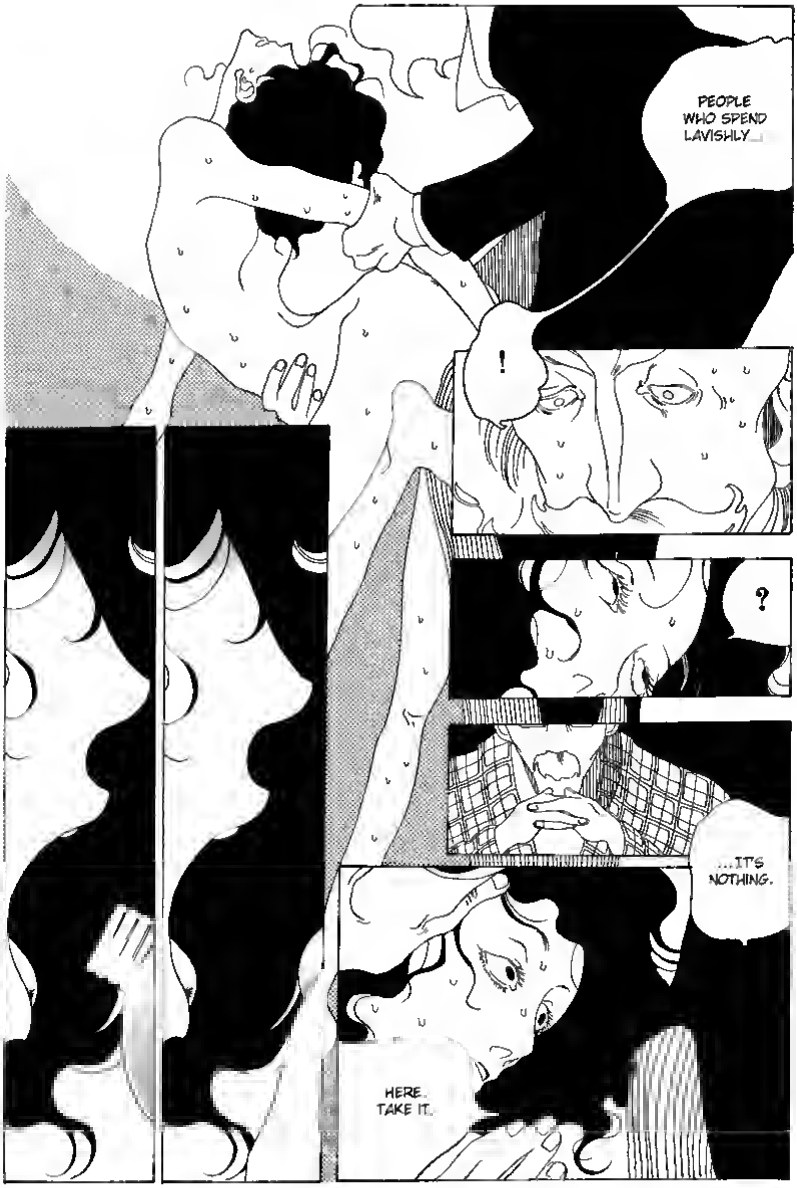

.....
BEFORE WHAT...?
YOU WEREN'T ALWAYS A CLOWN, WERE YOU?
HAVE YOU PERFORMED ANYWHERE ELSE?
.....
I USED TO DO THE...
TRAPEZE VOLANT...


THAT'S WONDERFUL
THE FLYING TRAPEZE, HUH?!
I MUST SAY... I LOVE THE FLYING TRAPEZE MYSELF.
IT'S SIMPLY SPECTACULAR.
YE...H.
IT WAS FUN, BRO.
YOU, AND ME, AND...
ACTUALLY, TO TELL THE TRUTH...
THE TWO OF US WERE A TEAM.
I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT BE THE CASE.
I THOUGHT


YOU MIGHT'VE BEEN A TRAPEZE ARTIST
IN THE PAST
YESTERDAY WHEN I HAD YOU STRIP NAKED
I SAW THE HOLLOW SCARS ON YOUR ANKLES AND THE TOPS OF YOUR FEET.
WERE THE FEET OF A TRAPEZE ARTIST.
AND BE-CAUSE THE SCARS WERE SO DEEP.
I COULD TELL YOU'D PUT QUITE A BIT OF PRACTICE IN
BUT I THINK IT'S A SHAME THAT YOU QUIT.
I HAD A LITTLE BROT-HER.
I'M SURE YOU HAD YOUR REASONS
...OH?


HE WAS A TRAPEZE ARTIST AS WELL
I SEE.
AND?
WHAT IS HE DOING NOW?
HE'S DEAD.
HE FELL FROM THE TRAPEZE
YOU...


?
CAME BACK WITHOUT A SINGLE MARK ON YOU.
THESE GUYS FIGURE THAT ONCE THEY PAY, THEY'VE GOT FREE LICENSE TO DO WHATEVER THEY WANT
THEY'RE PARTICULARLY HARD ON THE CONTORTIONISTS.
COME BACK COVERED IN BRUISES.
UGH
SUCH CRUELTY
WHAT
IS HE GOING ON ABOUT?
HE'S THE ONE WHO PROFITS
PERHAPS BEING RICH
MAKES PEOPLE CORRUPT
THE MOST CORRUPT PERSON OF ALL
IS YOU


PEOPLE WHO SPEND LAVISHLY...
!
?
...IT'S NOTHING.
HERE. TAKE IT.


spit
gurgle gurgle gurgle
FAGGOT CLOWN!
YOU'RE UNATTRACTIVE, AND CONCEITED TO BOOT.
CAN'T SLEEP WITH A MOUTHFUL OF SEMEN?


HMPH.
DON'T TELL ME IT'S A PRE-SENT?
OH MY... THAT'S A PRETTY NICE SWEATER YOU'RE WEARING
E..TING GOOD FOOD,
WEARING NICE CLO-THES...
SELLING YOUR ASS TO MEN MEANS NO-THING TO YOU!
YOU REALLY ARE
WORTH-LE...


MMPH
HACK
BLECH!
COUGH
COUGH
WHA...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
drool
drool
AH...


NO...
AAAH
...!
AH
...!
MMM...


AH!
sigh...
NO



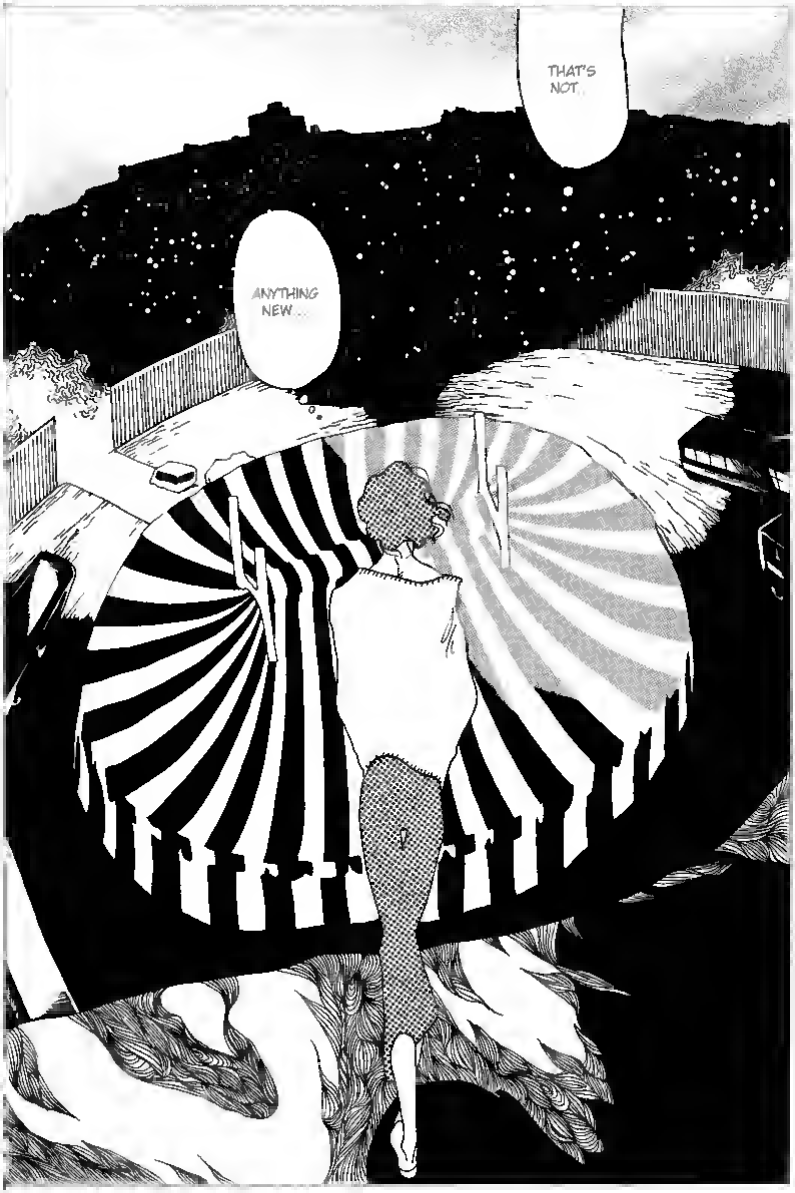

NO...
STOP.
STOP.
STOP!
ENOUGH!
PLEASE ...
AAAAH!
MM.


YOU ACTUALLY GOT INTO IT?
STUPID GIRL.
drenched


JERK!
IDIOT!
GO TO HELL!
AA-AAH!


THAT WAS AWFULLY MEAN OF YOU, BRO.
THAT GIRL
sob
UU!
UUUU...
REALLY LIKES .
SHUT UP, YOU.


.....
"AW-
FULLY
MEAN
-!-"



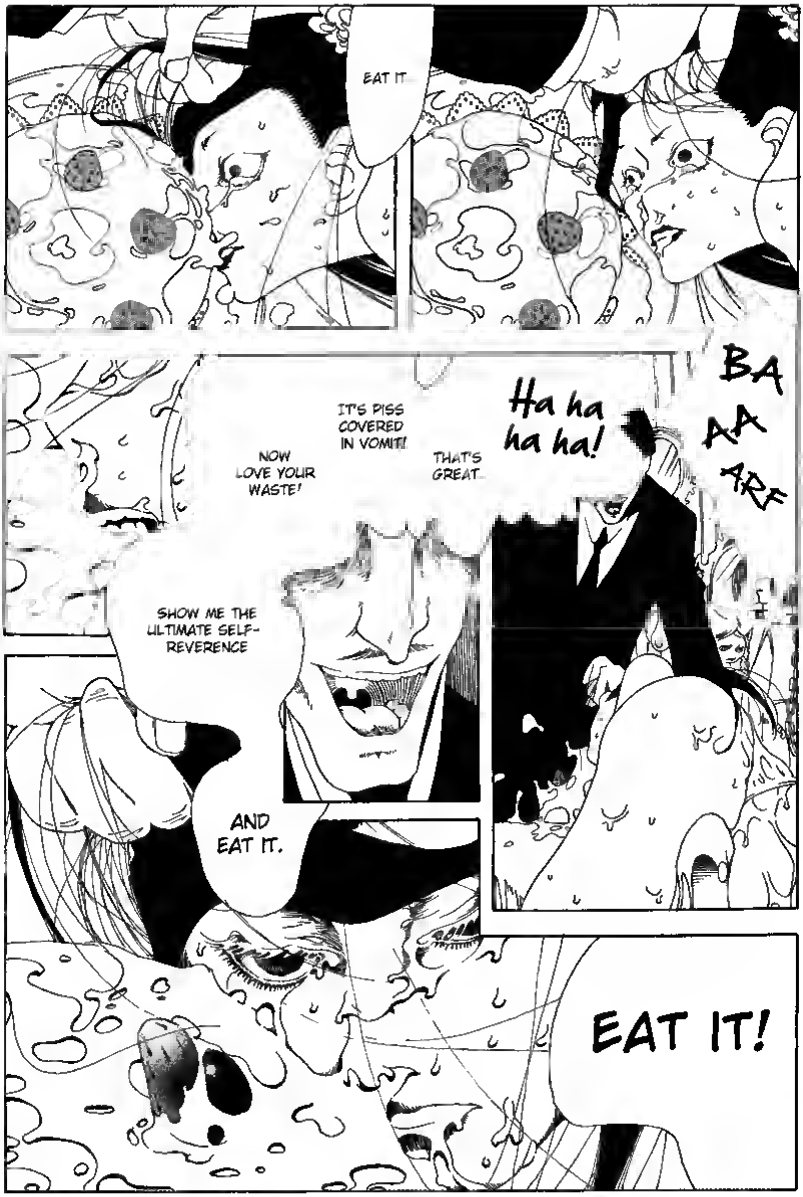
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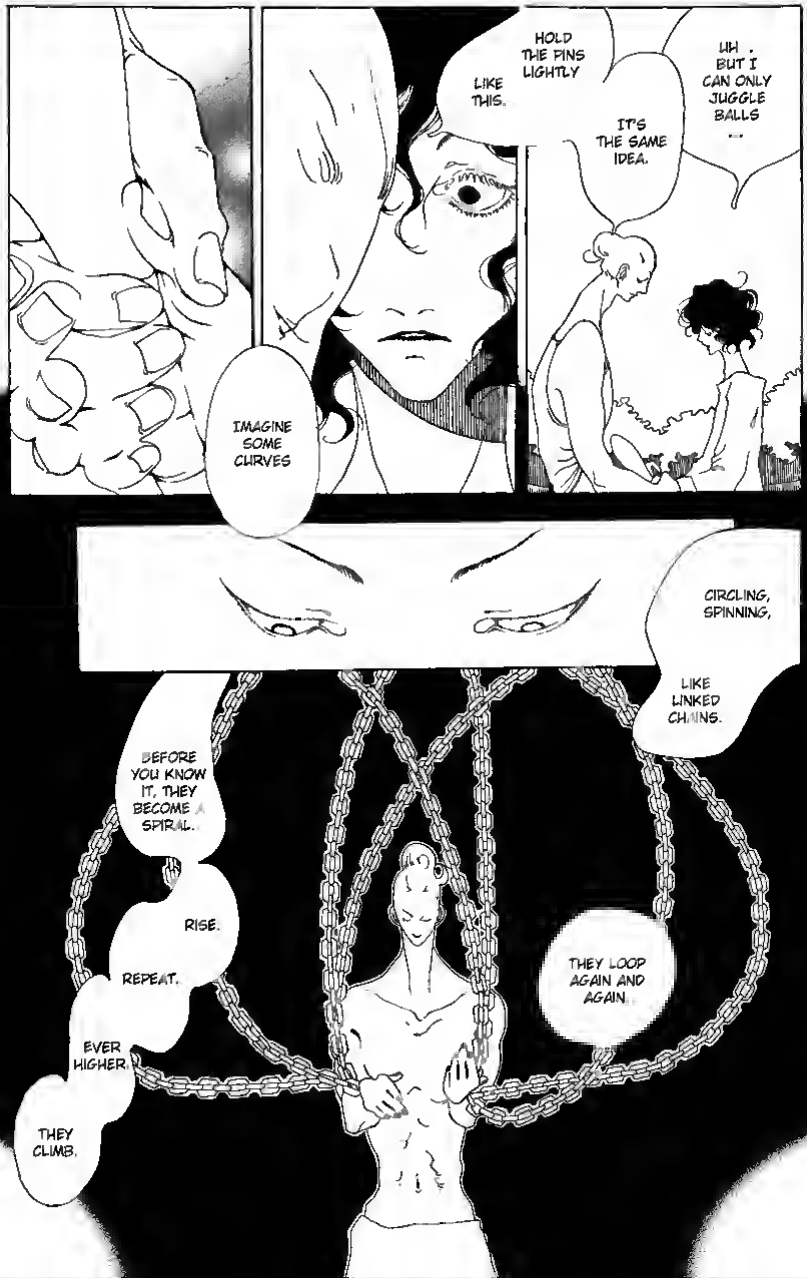


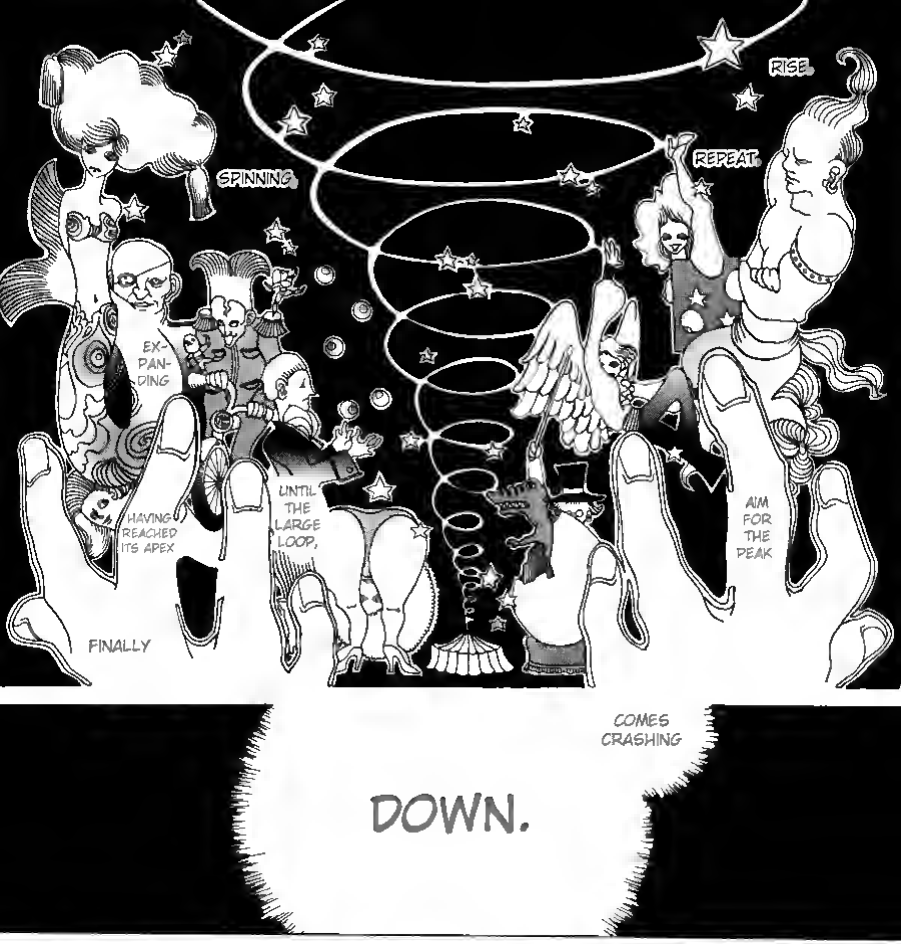

CRY HARDER.
UU!
DON'T SPEAK, CRY.
DROOL. DRIP SNOT.
LET ME SEE YOU SUFFER.
HOW'S THAT BLADDER OF YOURS FEEL, SO FULL OF WATER?
PISS YOUR-SELF.
LET IT GO. PISS YOUR-SELF!
AH!
THAT'S RIGHT.
URRGH ...
AAAH ...
PISS!
SLOSH


THAT'S RIGHT. FEEL THE WARM PISS BETWEEN YOUR THIGHS.
UUU...
SI... GH...
UU...
FOUL THAT FOOD WITH YOUR OWN SHIT.
NOW EAT IT.


EAT IT.
BA AA ARF
Ha ha ha ha!
IT'S PISS COVERED IN VOMIT!
NOW LOVE YOUR WASTE!
THAT'S GREAT.
SHOW ME THE ULTIMATE SELF-REVERENCE
AND EAT IT.
EAT IT!

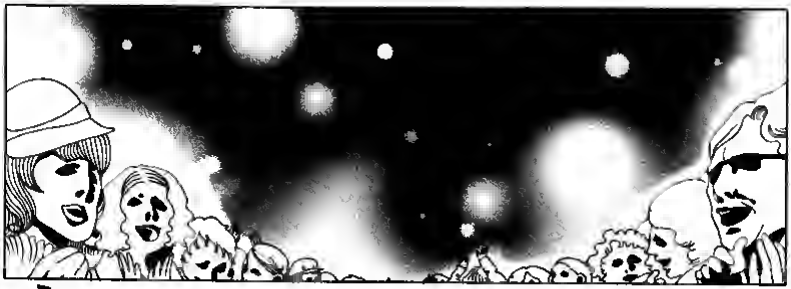

drip
drip
slurp
pop
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY?
EH?!


HOLD THE PINS LIGHTLY
LIKE THIS.
UH . BUT I CAN ONLY JUGGLE BALLS ...
IT'S THE SAME IDEA.
IMAGINE SOME CURVES
CIRCLING, SPINNING,
LIKE LINKED CHAINS.
BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, THEY BECOME A SPIRAL.
RISE.
REPEAT.
EVER HIGHER.
THEY CLIMB.
THEY LOOP AGAIN AND AGAIN.



COMES
CRASHING

DOWN.




LET'S CALL IT A DAY!
GOOD WORK.
NICE JOB, GEE.
MEL, YOU'VE GOT THE CUSTOMER IN SEAT THREE.
DON'T LET ME DOWN
BIRD'S NEST, YOU HURRY OVER TO THE REAR EXIT.
MINA!
YOUR CUSTOMER FROM YESTERDAY HAS REQUESTED YOU AGAIN!
I WORKED HARD TO GET THIS GUY,
SO DON'T MESS THIS UP.


NO!
NO.
I CAN'T!
ABSOLUTELY ANYONE
BUT HIM!


ACK!
thw
ock
OUR NUMBER ONE CUSTOMER WAS SECURED BY A CLOWN!
OR WOULD YOU RATHER
SELL YOUR KIDNEYS?
POOR LITTLE GIRL.
YOU WANT TO PAY OFF YOUR PARENTS' DEBT, DON'T YOU?
BIRD'S NEST!
HE'S WAITING!
...DO YOU THINK YOU'RE IN ANY POSITION TO PICK AND CHOOSE YOUR CUSTOMERS?
LEAD PERFORMER? DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH
snap
snap
snap


『L'enfant de la balle』
?
IT MEANS A CHILD BORN AND RAISED IN THE CIRCUS
IT'S ABOUT "TRUE-BORN" PERFORMERS LIKE YOURSELF.
...IT WASN'T
ALL THAT GREAT...
MY MOTHER'S BROTHER... MY UNCLE RAN A SMALL CIRCUS
WHERE EVEN THE BEST PERFORMER COULD ONLY DO ONE FLIP ON THE TRAPEZE...
COOH?
WELL, EVEN SO,
I WOULD HAVE LOVED TO SEE

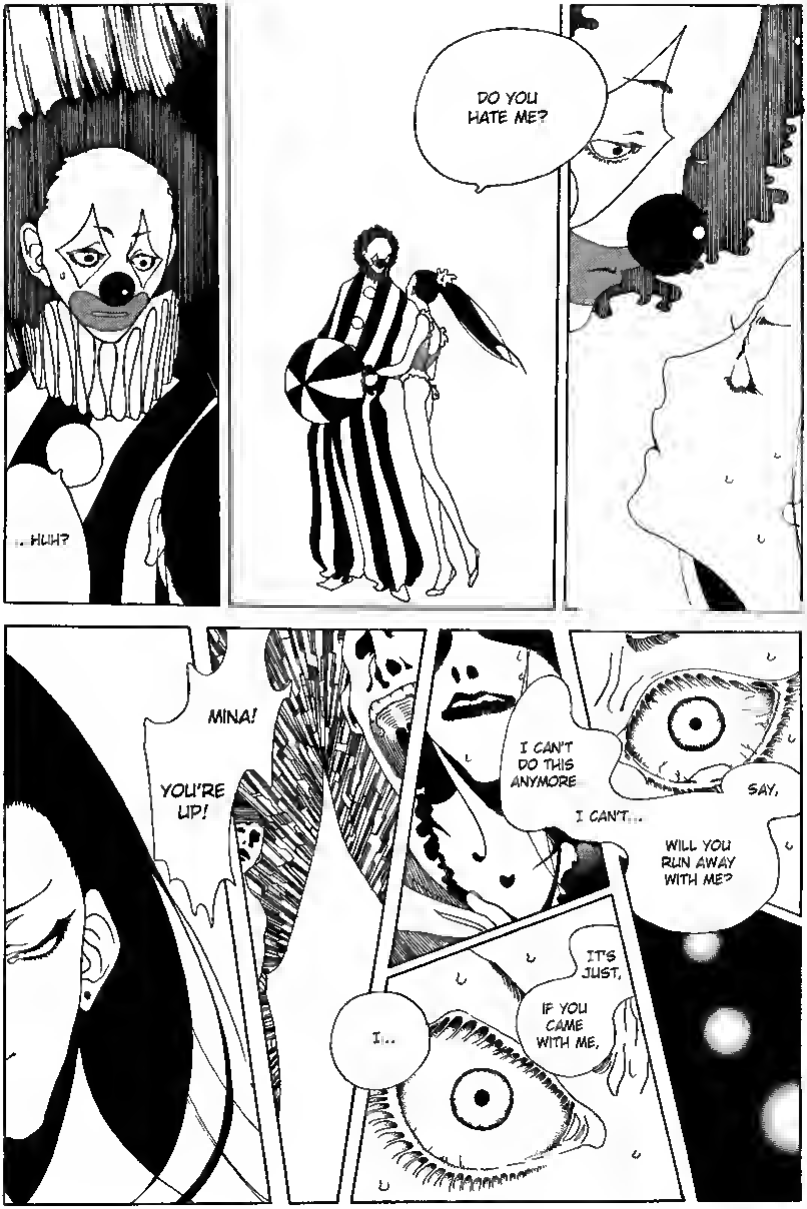

HOW WONDER-FUL
I WONDER DID YOUR LITTLE BROTHER LOOK LIKE YOU?
SINCE YOUR BROTHER WAS A TRAPEZE ARTIST AS WELL,
YOU MUST'VE PERFORMED AS PARTNERS
.....
.....
YOU FLY THROUGH THE AIR.
NO...
HE WAS MUCH MORE...
BEAUTIFUL... HE WAS TRULY HANDSOME
WE HAD DIFFERENT FATHERS,
QUITE UNLIKE MY NEST OF HAIR
SO HIS HAIR WAS SMOOTH AND BLONDE
HIS WAS MORE
BEAUTIFUL

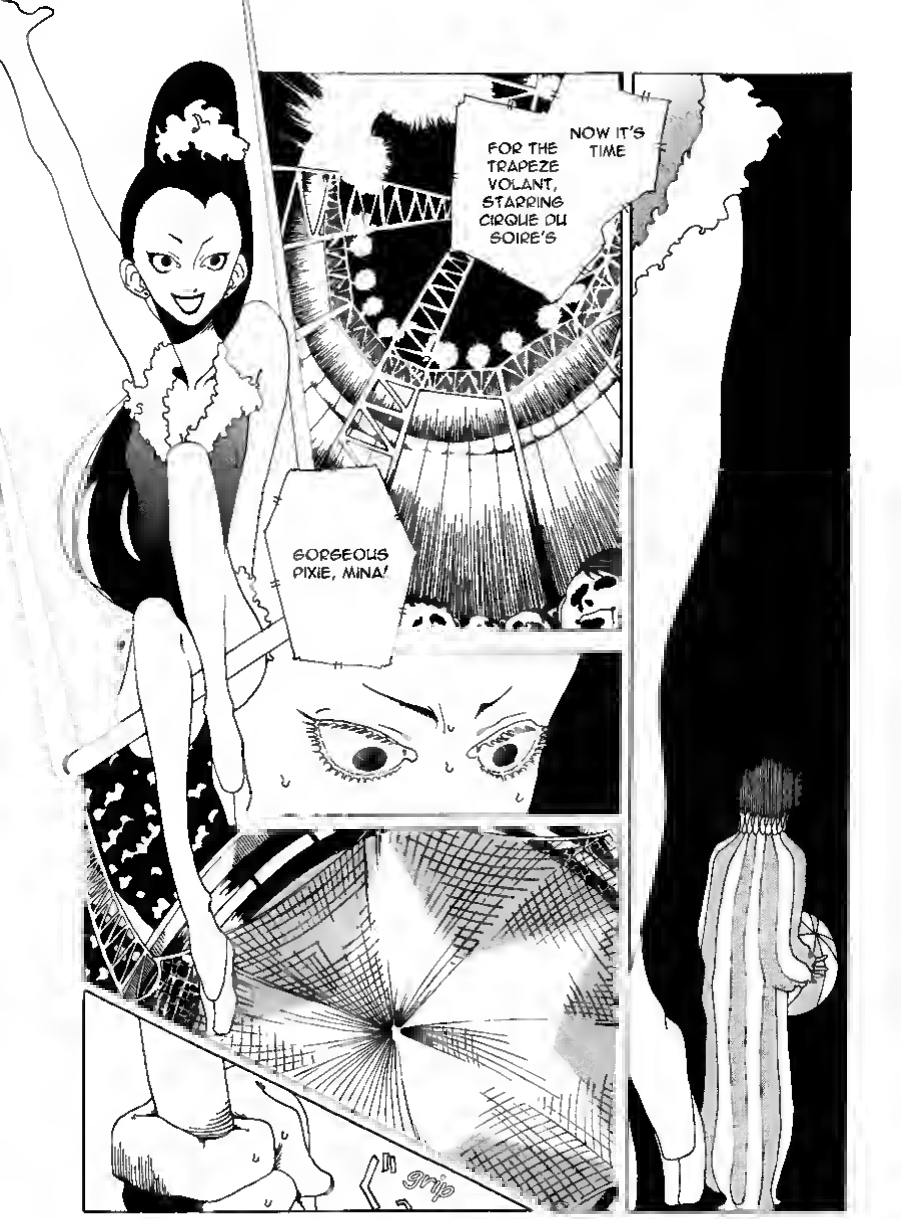

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT
I LIKE YOUR BLACK,
CURLY HAIR
HM?
EH?
THIS CAME OUT OF YOUR HEAD !!

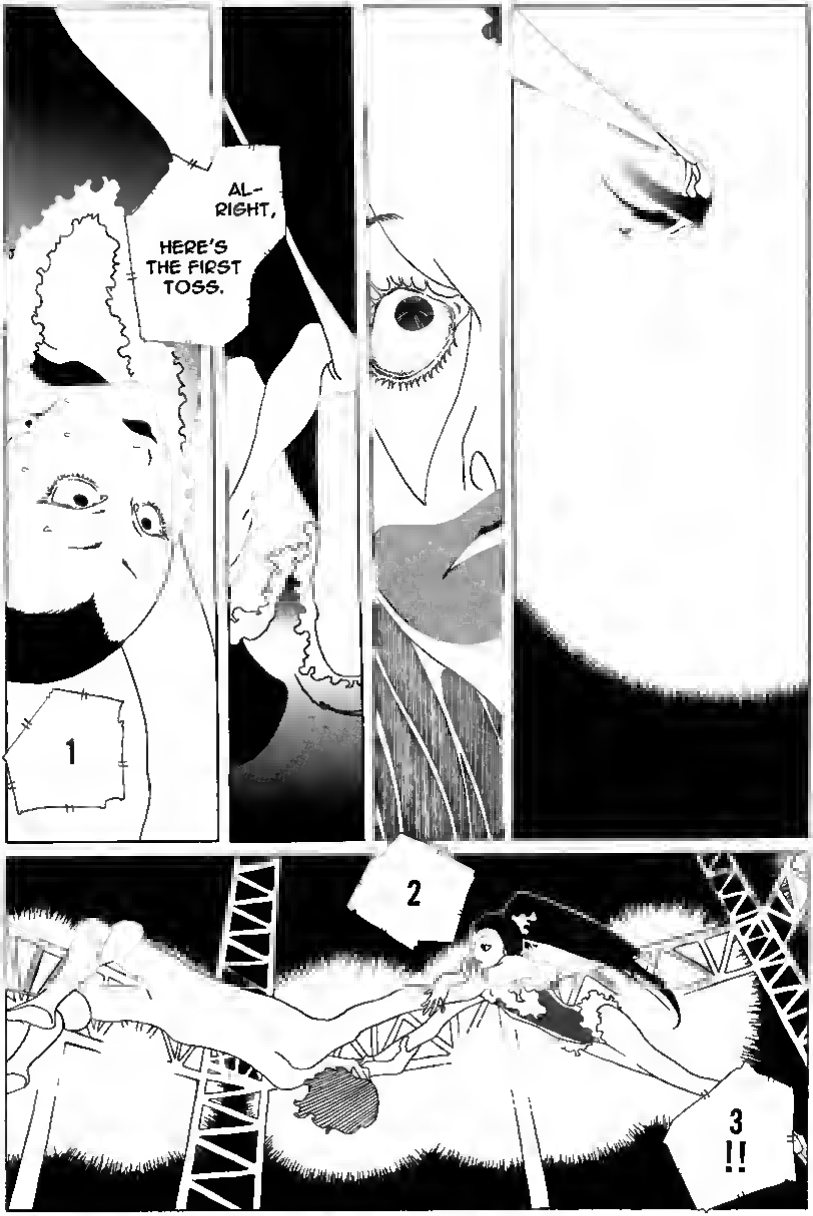

...UM...
OK.
DON'T GET TOO CHOKED UP
IT'S A GOOD-LUCK CHARM
SO THAT YOUR SHOW MAY GO WELL.
TOMORROW'S THE LAST DAY, ISN'T IT?
I PRAY THAT YOUR ANSWER
IS A FAVO-RABLE ONE.
ROLL CALL!


MINA!
Mina!
Mina!
Mina!
Mina!
Here!
Here!
...HERE.
I NEED YOU TO ANSWER ME IMMEDIATELY!
NEXT!
LEO!
Here!
BIRD'S NEST!
HERE!
WELL, TODAY IS OUR LAST DAY.
GIVE IT EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT!


HEY!
WHAT ARE YOU SITTING AROUND FOR, MINA?
IT'S ALMOST YOUR TURN.

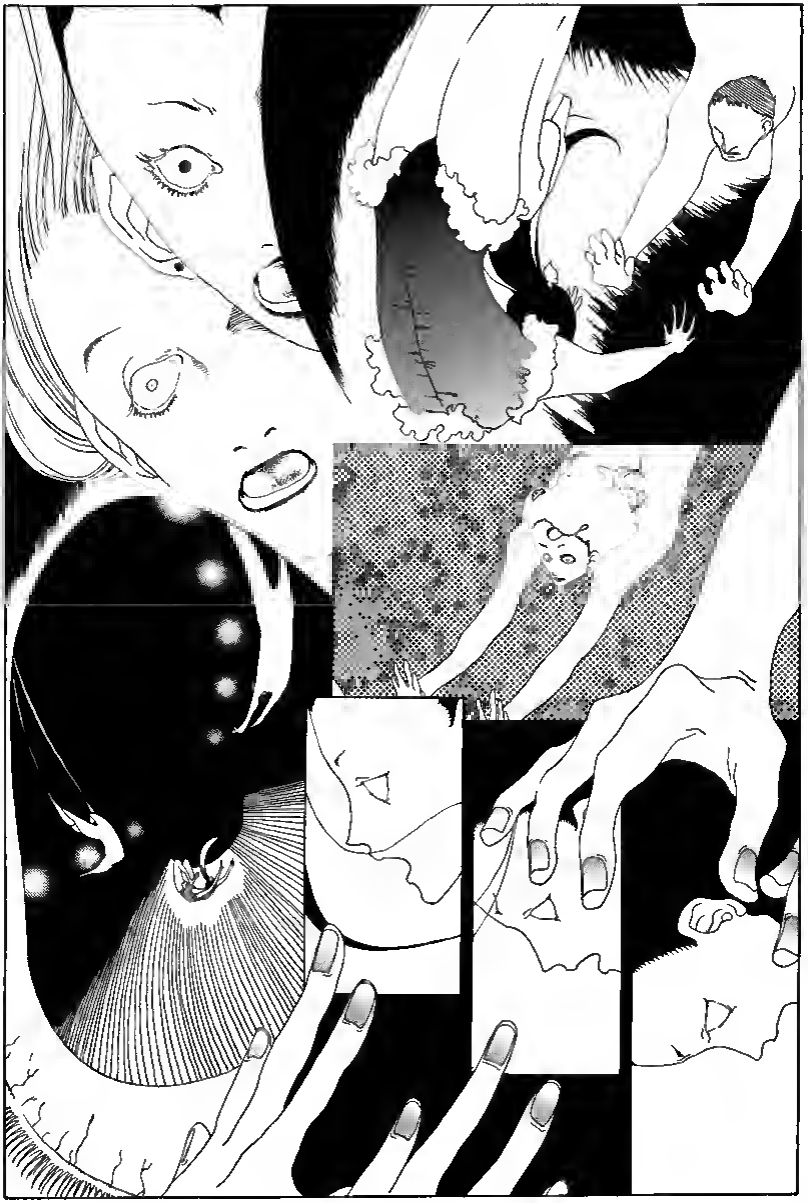

.. HUH?
DO YOU HATE ME?
MINA!
YOU'RE UP!
I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE
I CAN'T...
SAY,
WILL YOU RUN AWAY WITH ME?
IT'S JUST,
IF YOU CAME WITH ME,
I...

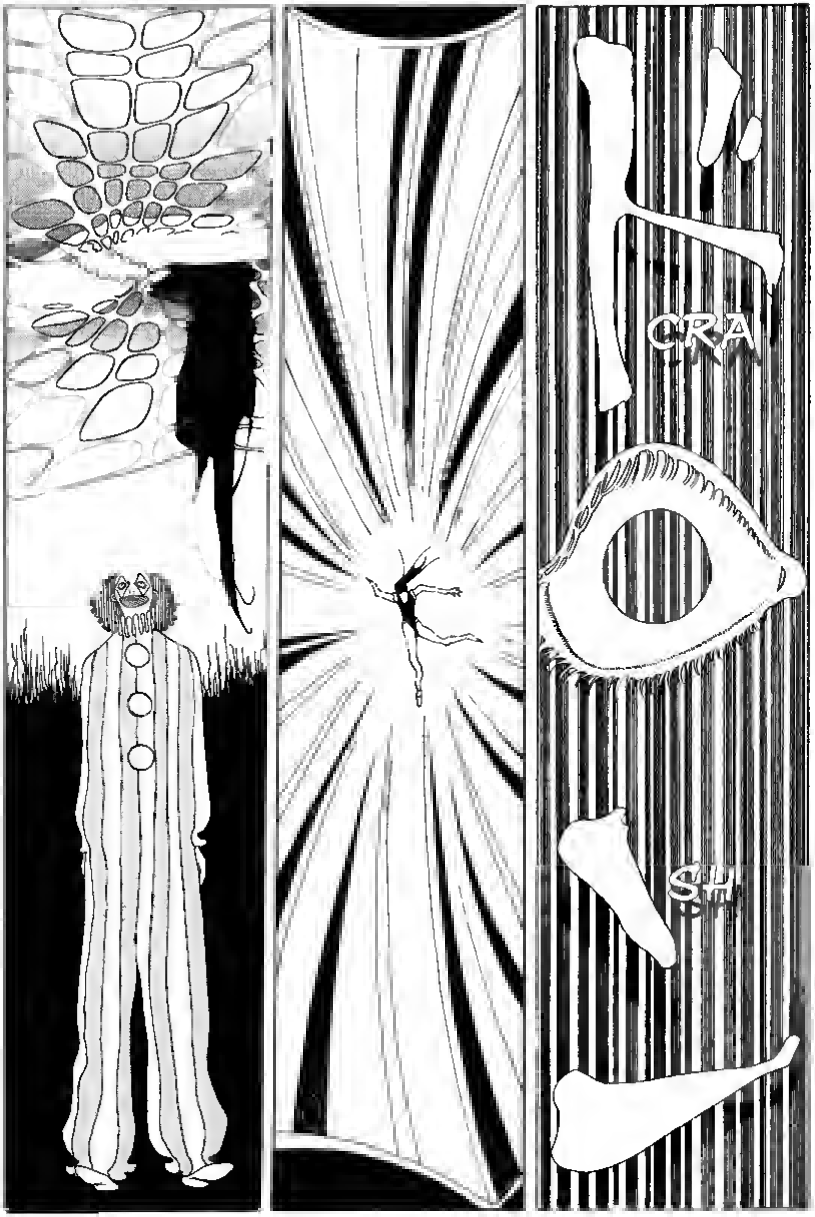

NOW IT'S TIME
FOR THE TRAPEZE VOLANT, STARRING CIRQUE DU SOIRE'S
GORGEOUS PIXIE, MINA!
grip

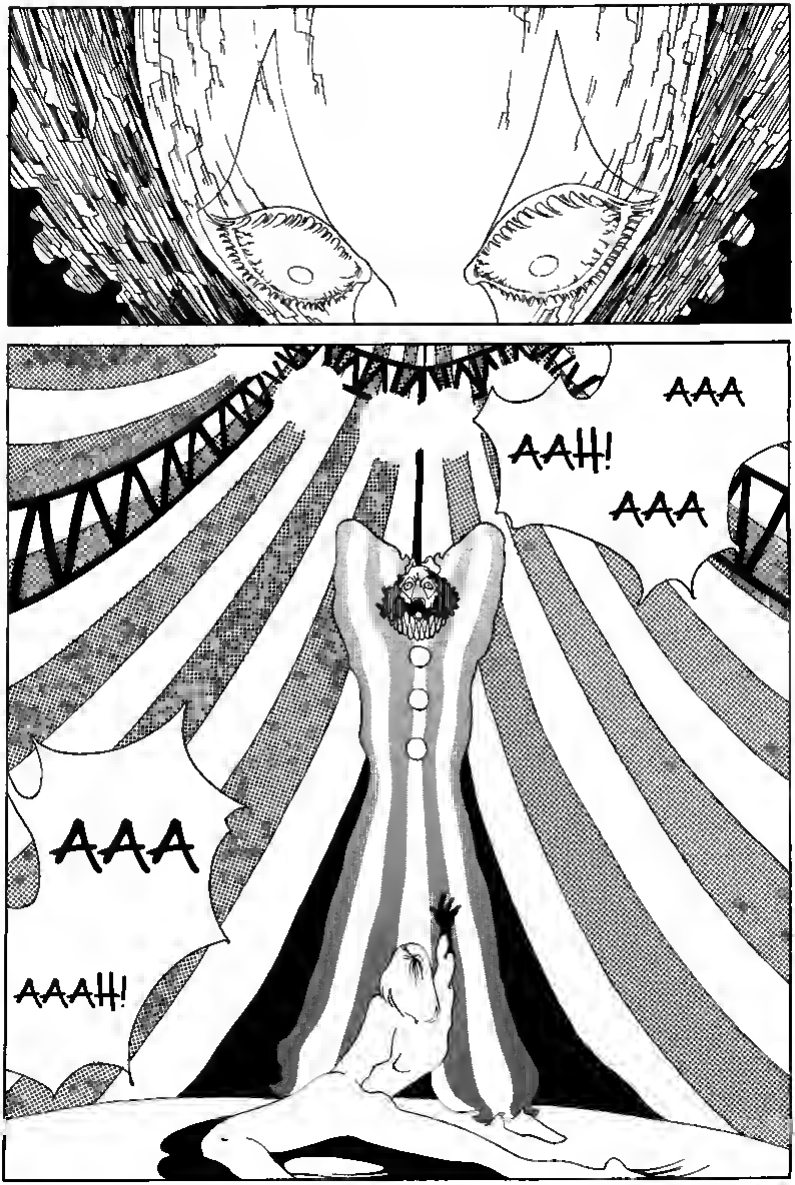

AL-
RIGHT,
HERE'S
THE FIRST
TOSS.
1
2
3
!!


SHE DID IT!
GIVE HER A ROUND OF APPLAUSE!
YOU COULD'VE AT LEAST SAID IT,
EVEN IF IT'S A LIE.
HOWEVER,
FICKLE PIXIES
NEVER TIE THEMSELVES DOWN TO ONE MAN.
THEY FLIT FROM FLOWER

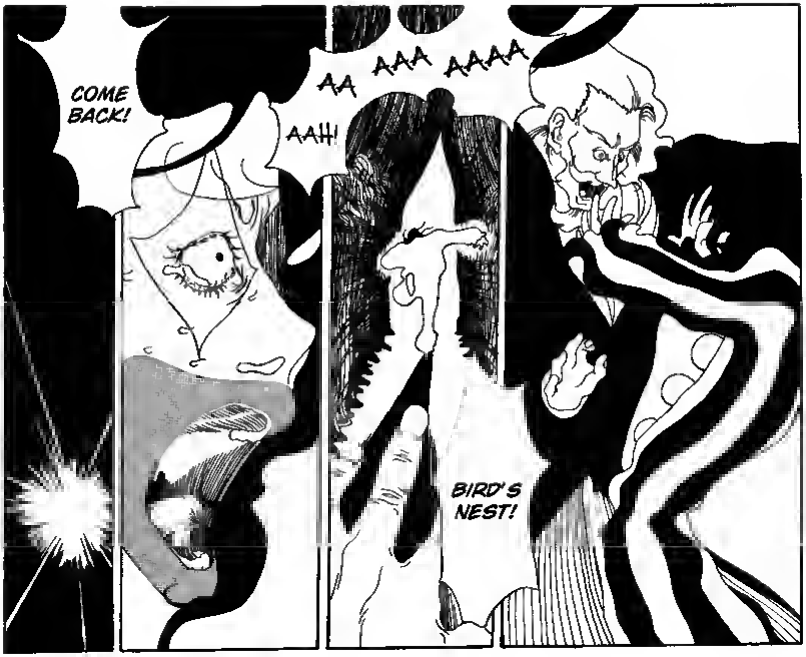

YOU COULD'VE SAID YOU DON'T HATE HER.
TO FLOWER.

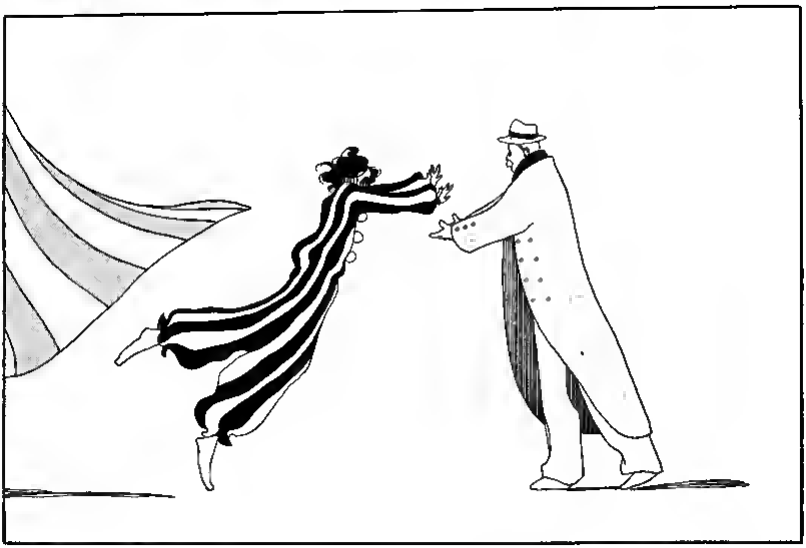


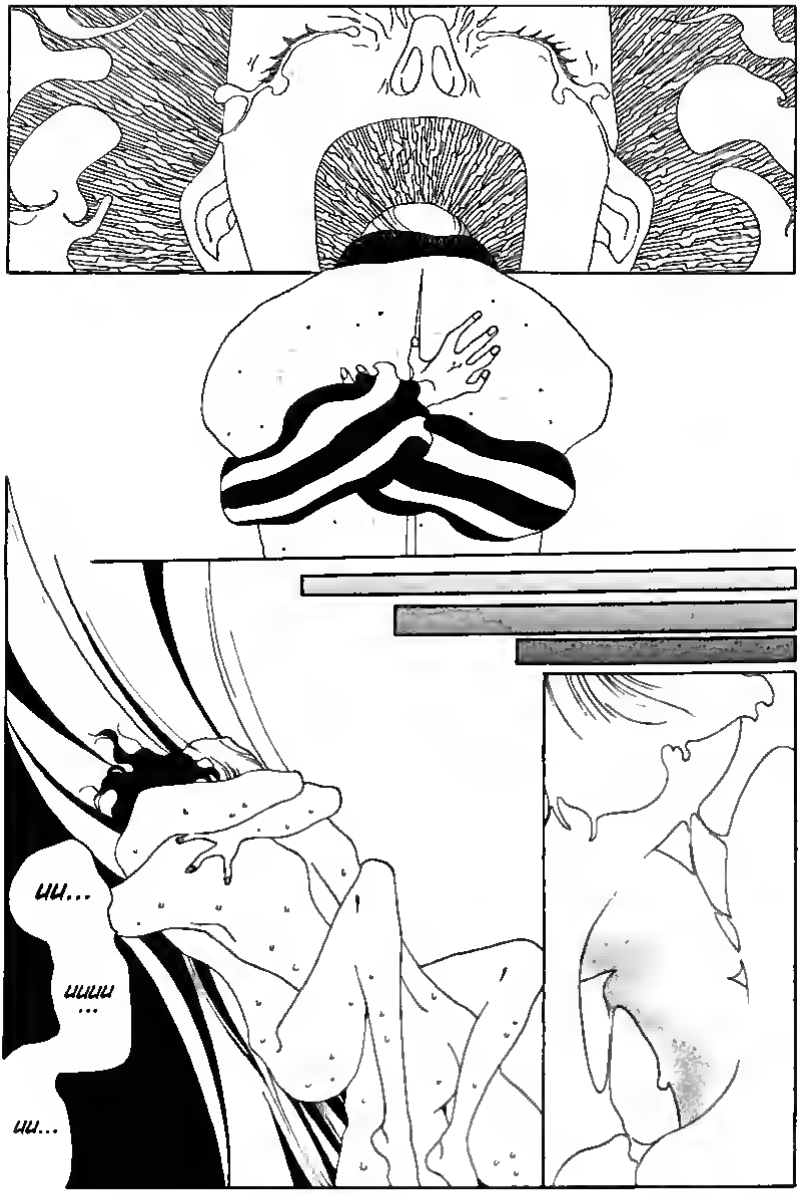

CRA
SH

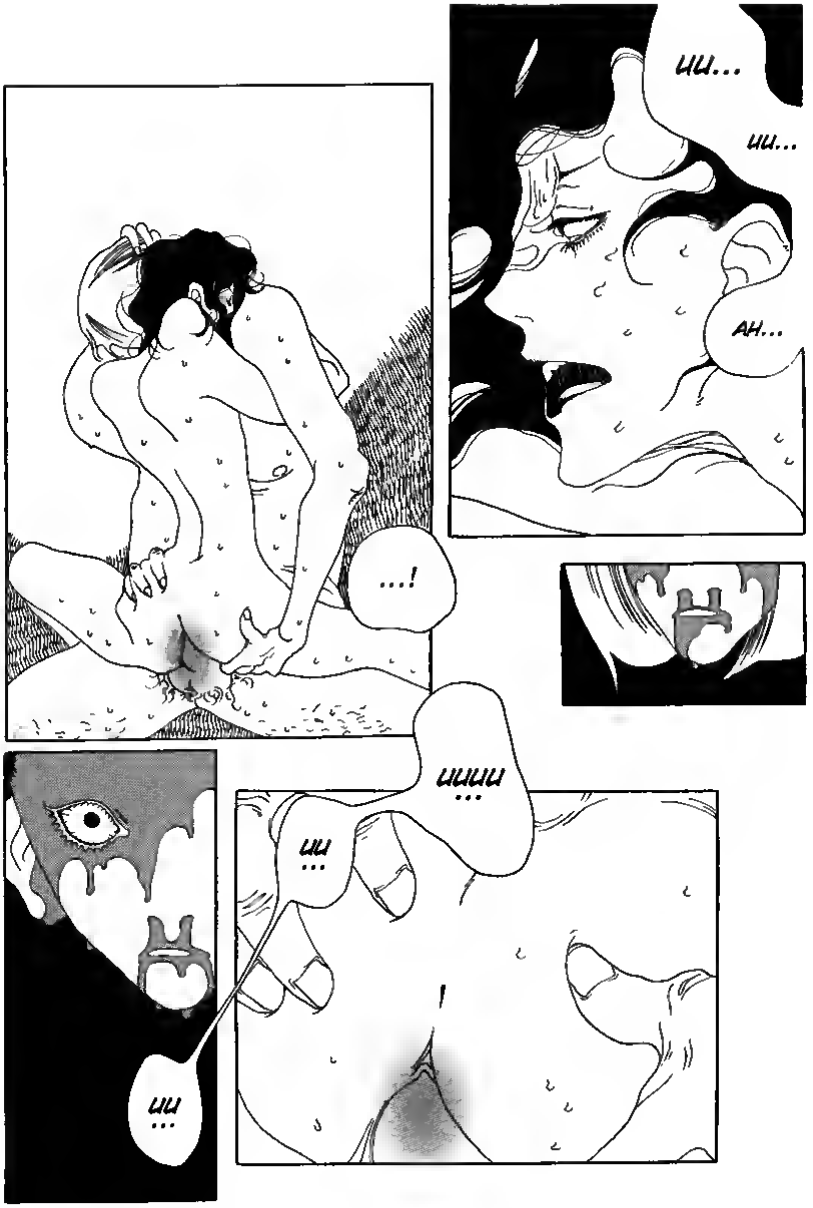

AAA
AAH!
AAA
AAA
AAAH!


AAAH!
Kyaaaah!
Aaaah!
Eeeeek!
AH!
PLEASE, EVERYBODY!
AAAAAAAAH!
SHE'S ALRIGHT!
SHE'S ALRIGHT!
SHUT UP!


COME BACK!
AA AAA AAAA
AAH!
BIRD'S NEST!



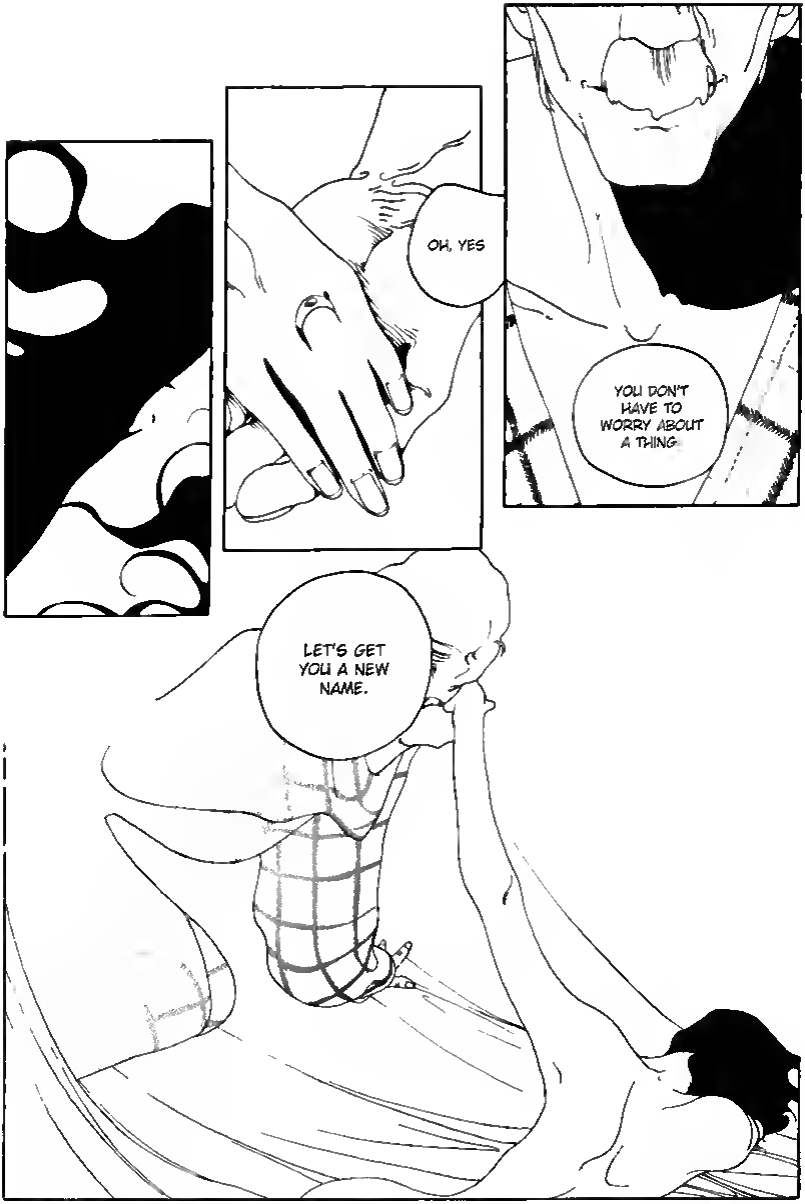

ии...
ииии...
ии...


ШШ...
ШШ...
АН...
...!
ШШШШ...
ШШ...
ШШ...


ЧЧ...!
AH!
AH!
AAAAH!
AH!


YOUR FACE IS PAINED
EVEN IN SLEEP,
MY DEAR BOY

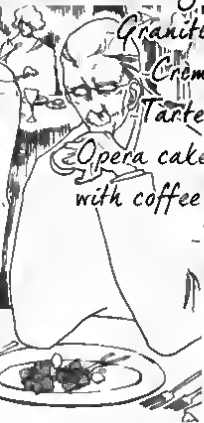

YES.
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I'LL GET YOU A PRIVATE TUTOR
AND PROVIDE YOU WITH A SUIT.
DARK BLUE WILL SUIT YOU NICELY.
FOOD, A PLACE TO REST, SOAP, NAIL CLIPPERS...
LEAVE EVERYTHING TO ME.



[End of Chapter 3]

Notes Page
Ch-4

Page 140:

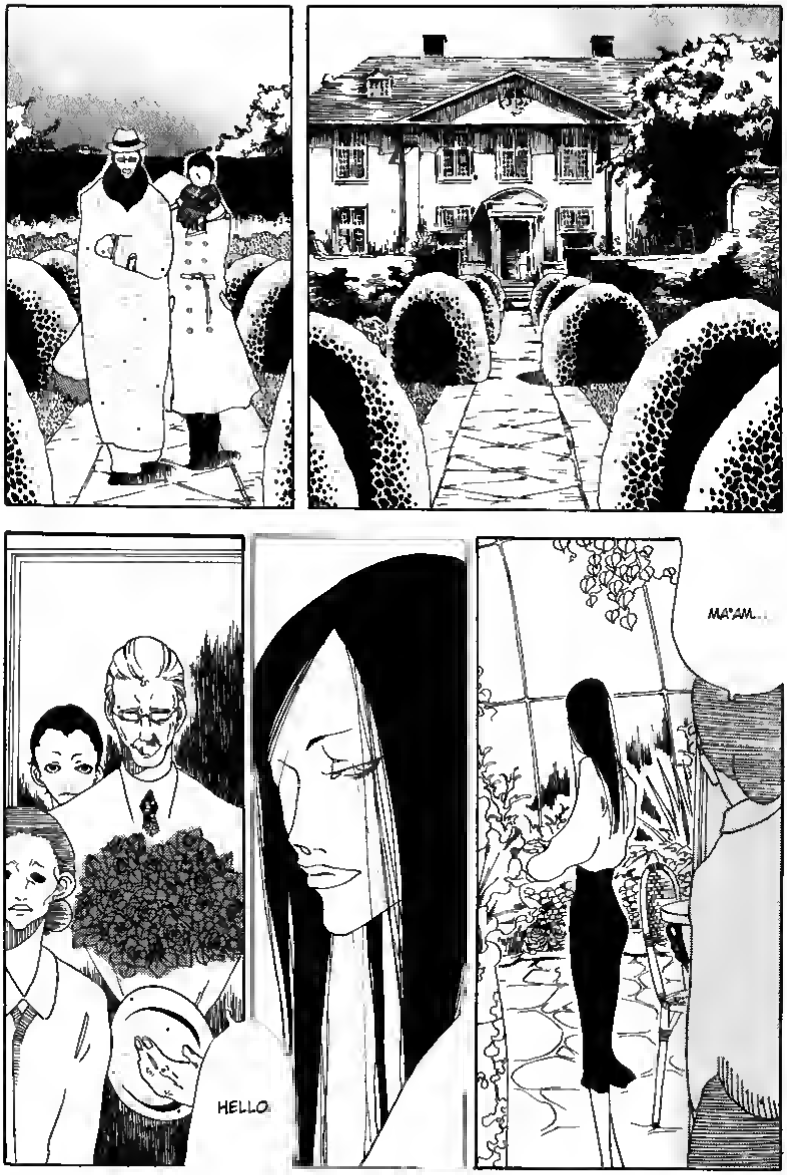


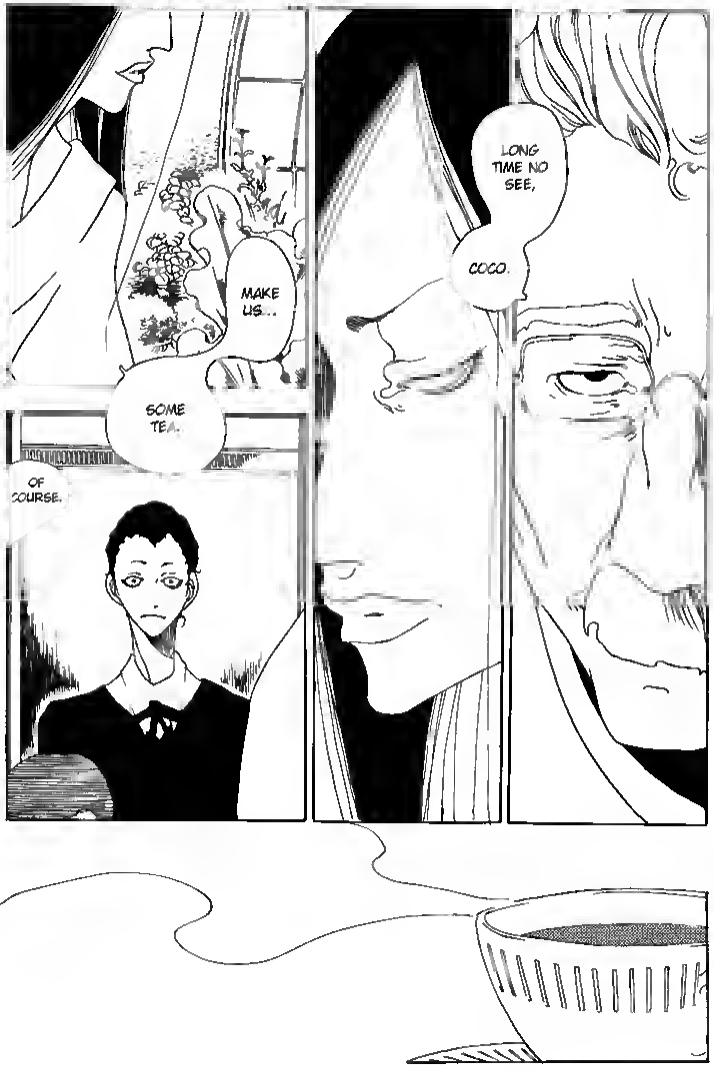
- Foie gras is made from duck or goose liver.
Granité is a frozen fruit and sugar dessert.
Crème fraiche is a bit like sour cream.
Tarte tatin is a caramelized apple tart
Opera cake is an almond and sponge cake layered with coffee buttercream and topped with chocolate.
-Tuiles are light, crisp cookies.

4

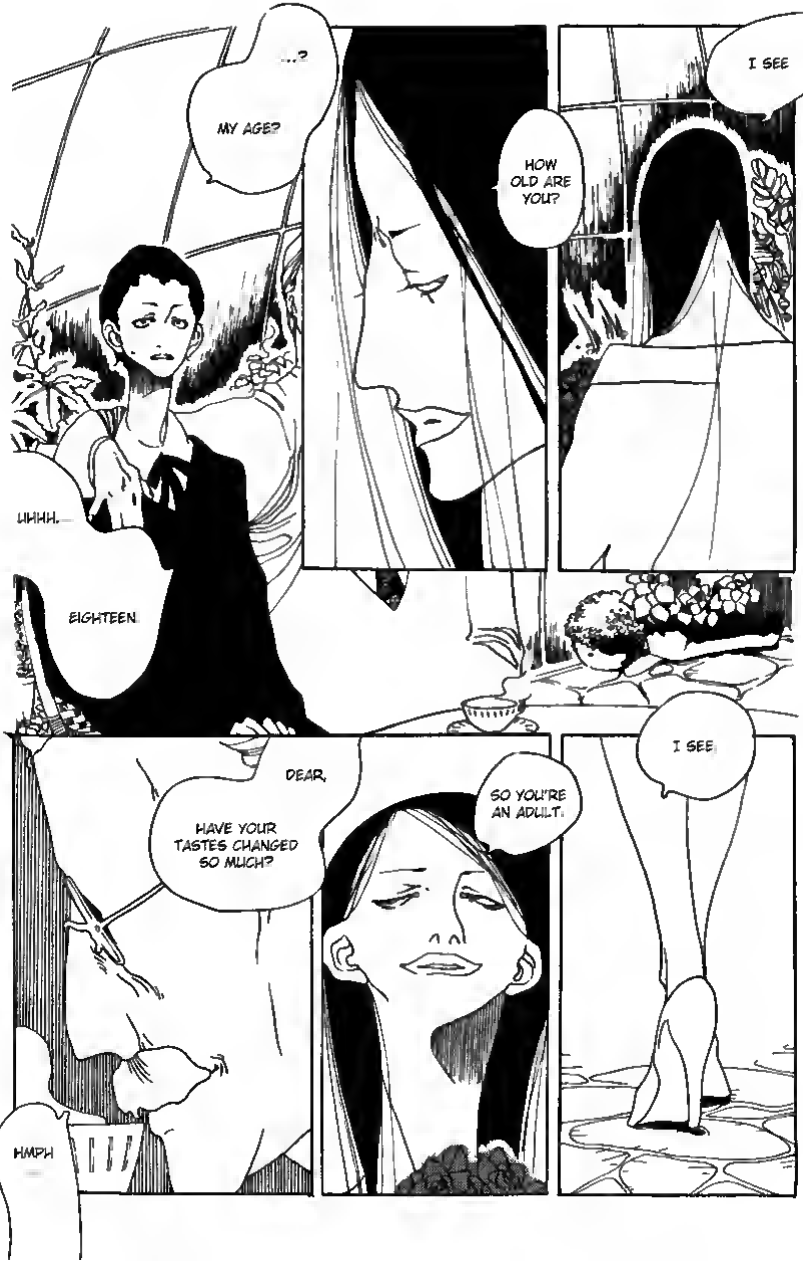

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

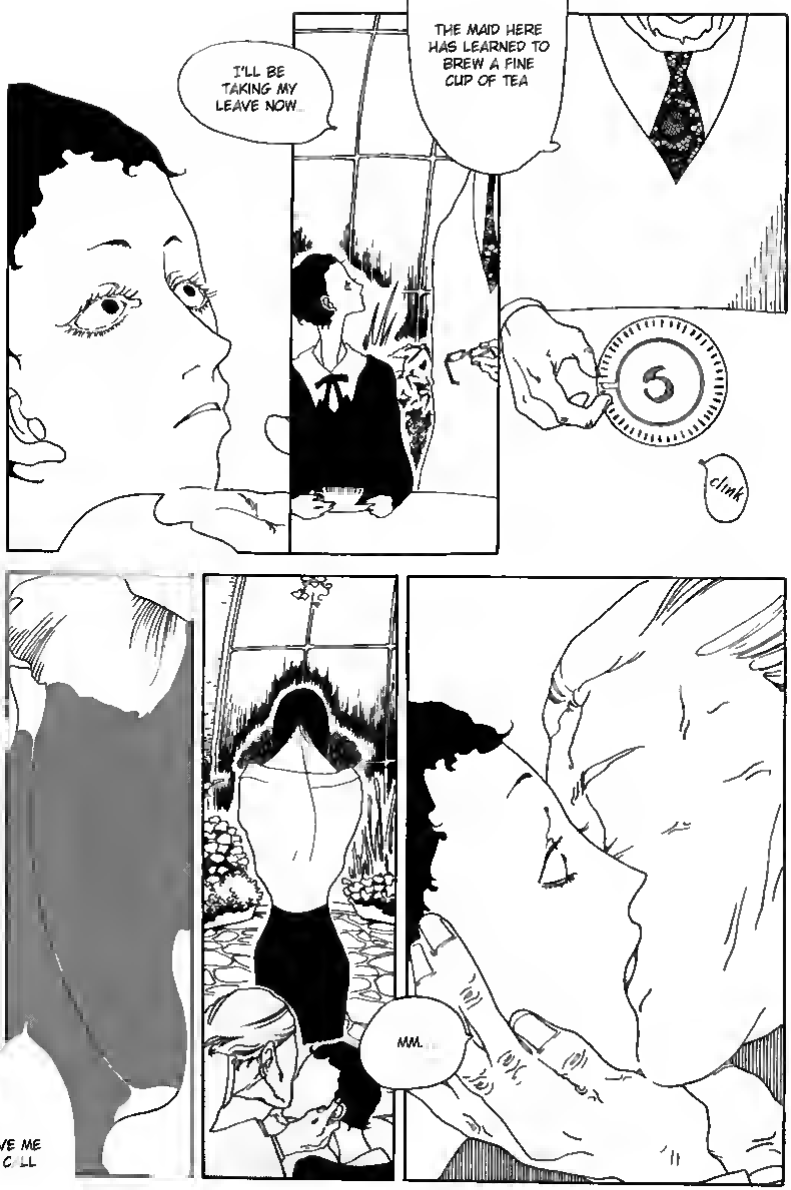

TAKEO.
YES.
VERY NICE
IT SUITS YOU


MA'AM...
HELLO.

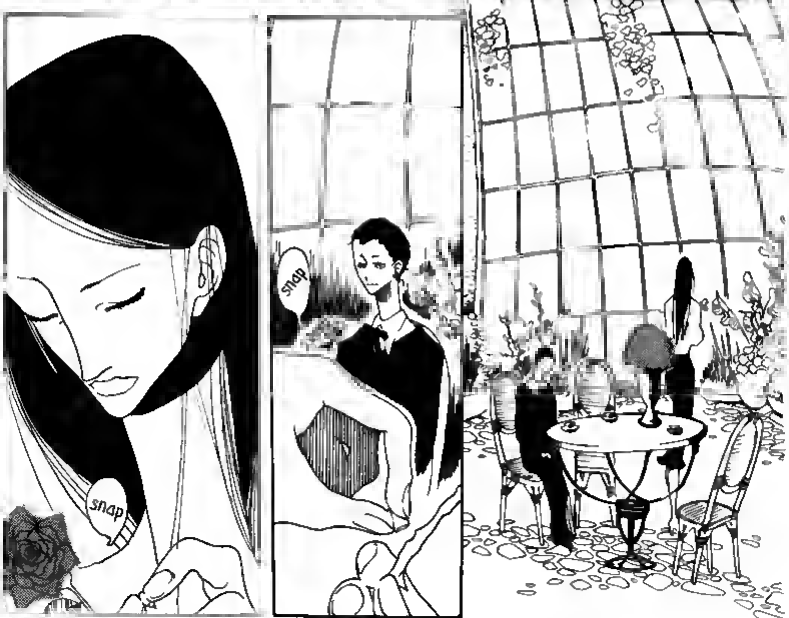

LONG TIME NO SEE,
COCO.
MAKE US...
SOME TEA.
OF COURSE.

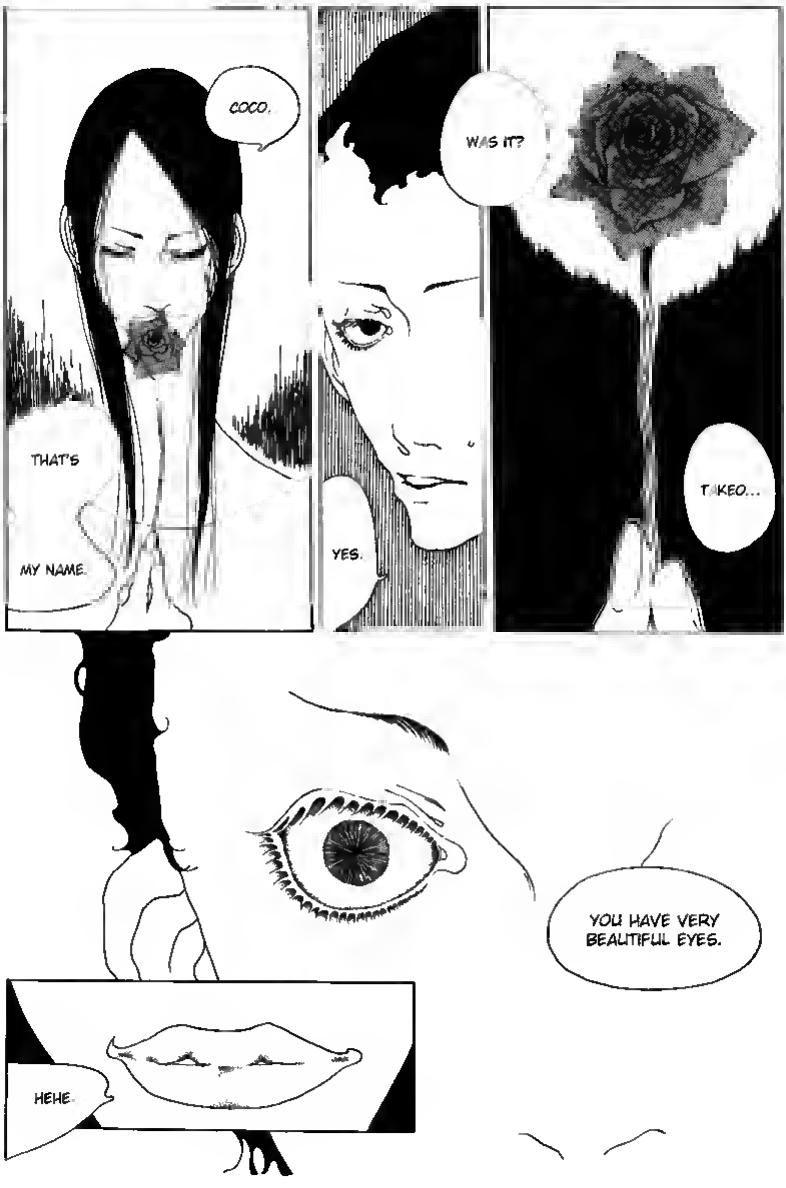

...AS I TOLD YOU OVER THE PHONE,
I'D LIKE YOU TO EDUCATE THIS BOY
THAT INCLUDES THINGS SUCH AS REFINED SPEECH AND MANNERS
NOW
POLISH HIM INTO A TRUE GENTLEMAN FOR ME
AH!
INTRO-DUCE YOUR-SELF
...MY NAME IS TAKEO.

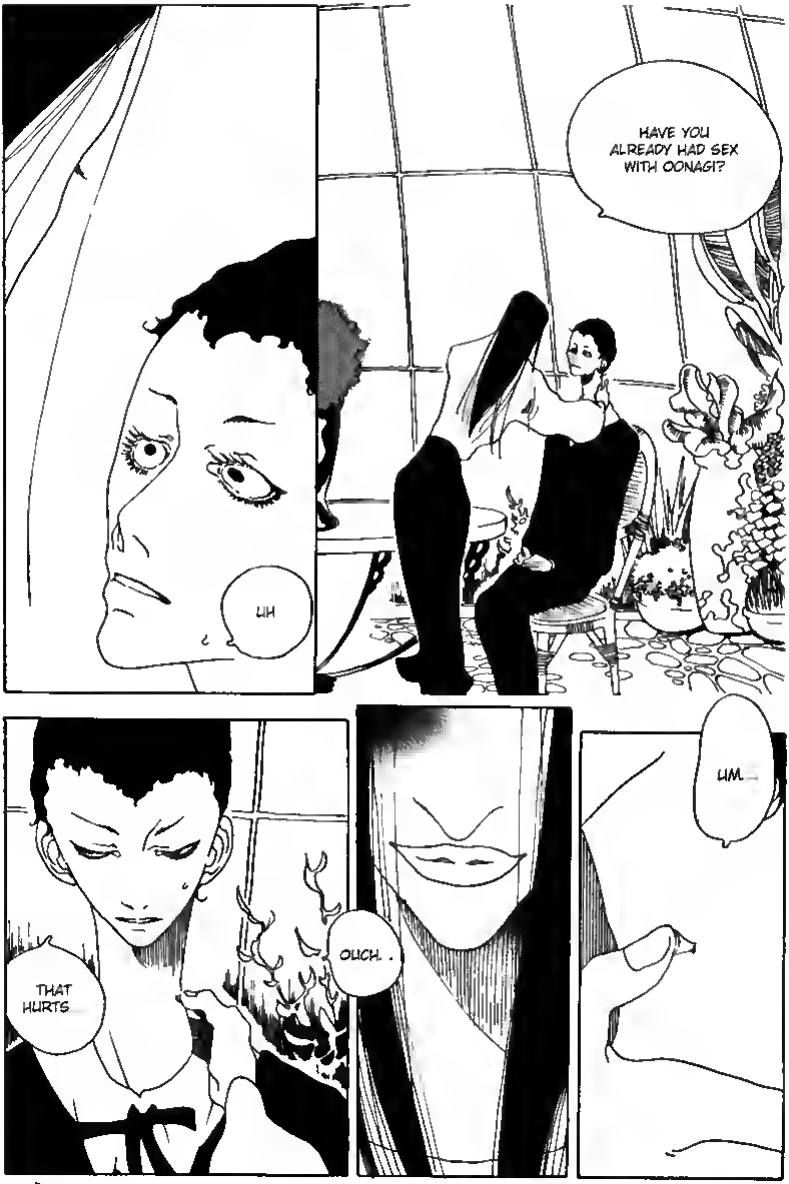

...?
MY AGE?
HOW OLD ARE YOU?
I SEE
UHHH...
EIGHTEEN.
DEAR,
HAVE YOUR TASTES CHANGED SO MUCH?
SO YOU'RE AN ADULT.
I SEE.
HMPH


I'LL BE TAKING MY LEAVE NOW...
THE MAID HERE HAS LEARNED TO BREW A FINE CUP OF TEA
clink
GIVE ME A CALL
MM...

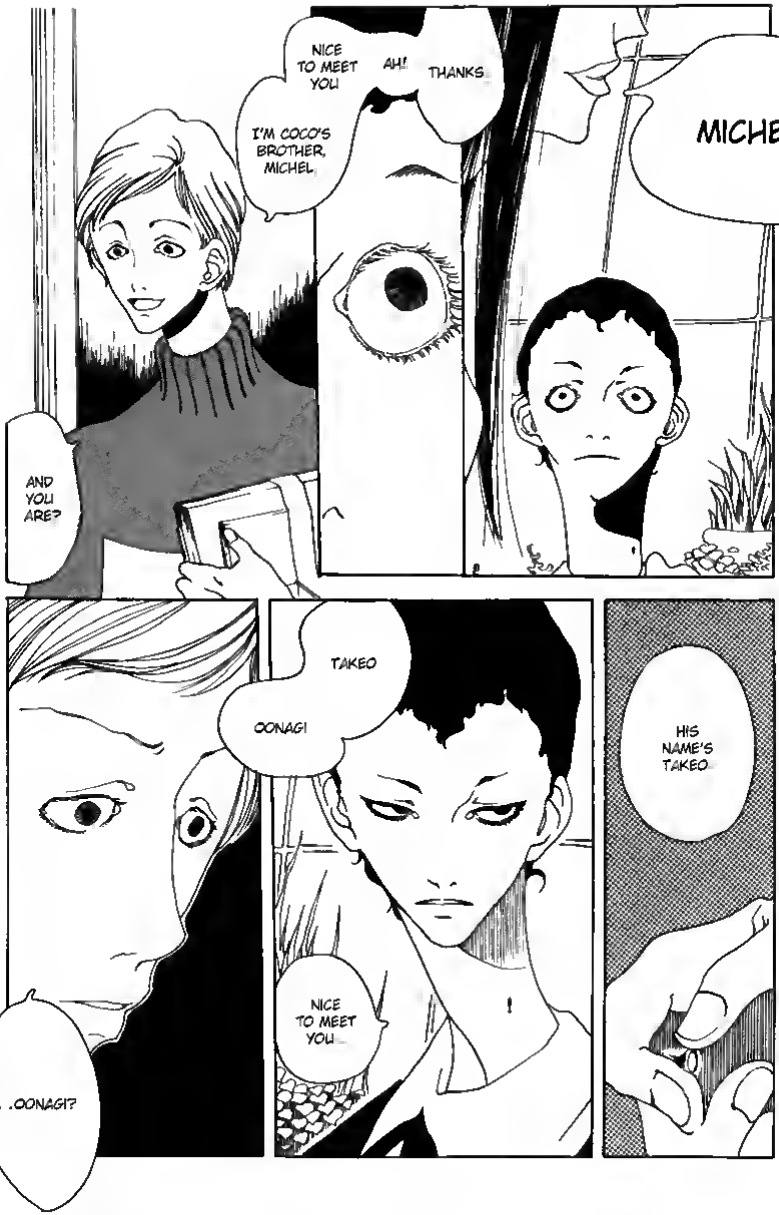

AT THIS NUMBER WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED.
WE'LL HAVE DINNER.
close


snap
snap


COCO.
THAT'S
MY NAME.
WAS IT?
YES.
TAKEO...
YOU HAVE VERY
BEAUTIFUL EYES.
HEHE.


HAVE YOU ALREADY HAD SEX WITH OONAGI?
UH
UM...
OUCH..
THAT HURTS


PUSH
Ow!
OPEN...
COCO
AH!
WELCOME HOME,
I'M SORRY.
YOU WITH A STUDENT?


MICHEL.
AH! THANKS.
NICE TO MEET YOU
I'M COCO'S BROTHER, MICHEL
AND YOU ARE?
HIS NAME'S TAKEO.
TAKEO OONAGI
NICE TO MEET YOU.
!
..OONAGI?


.....?
I'M...
OONAGI.
YES
MICHEL
SO PLEASE RELAX FOR A WHILE
I'LL TELL THE MAID TO MAKE A FRESH POT OF TEA.
WE'LL CONTINUE YOUR STUDIES TOMORROW
GOING TO GO TAKE A BREAK.


KEEP HIM COMPANY


...OH
YE...H...
AH!
YOU'RE HURT.
EH?
MY APOLOGIES.
COCO DID THIS, DIDN'T SHE?
I'LL GO FETCH SOME OINTMENT.


STING A LITTLE
THIS MIGHT
...NNG!
I'M FINE
BA-THUMP

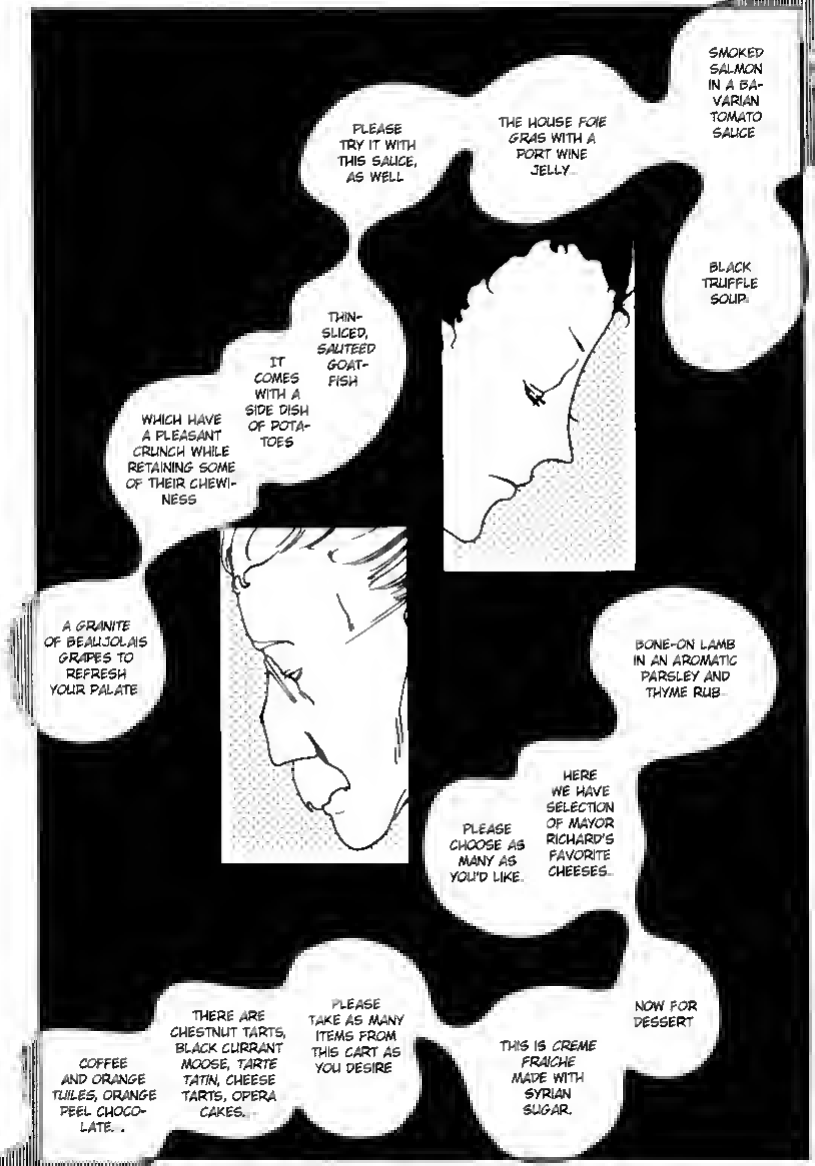

thump
thump
thump
UM.
UH..
I'M SORRY ABOUT COCO
UMM..
OONAGI AND COCO
ARE MARRIED


M-MA-RRIED?
. EH?!
YES
THOUGH THEY'RE LIVING SE-PARATELY AT THE MOMENT
SO...
IT'S ... COM-PLICATED


THERE YOU ARE!
HOW DOES SOME CHAMPAGNE SOUND, MY BOY?
GET ME SOMETHING A LITTLE SWEETER THAN USUAL.
UM.


CHEERS.
ARE YOU...
AND COCO ...?
NOW, NOW.
TAKE A SEAT.
YES..
PERFECT.
THAT'LL BE FINE

*See notes page

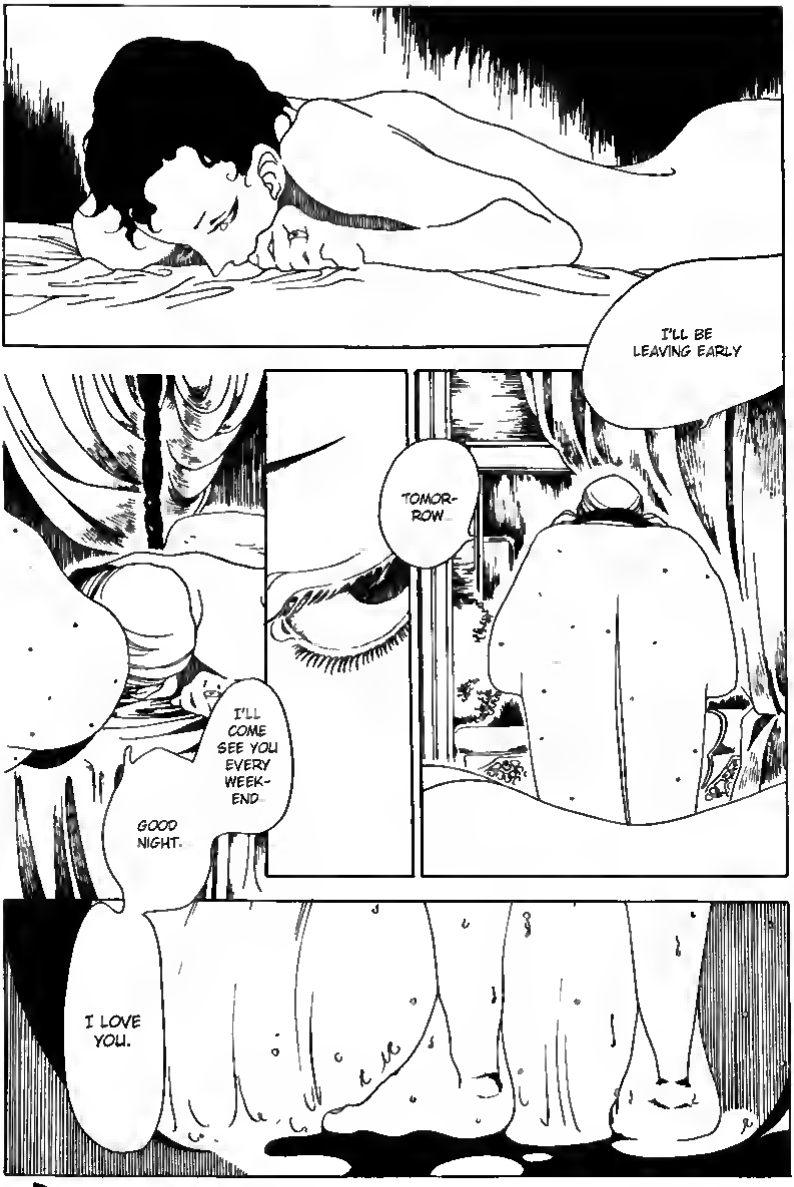


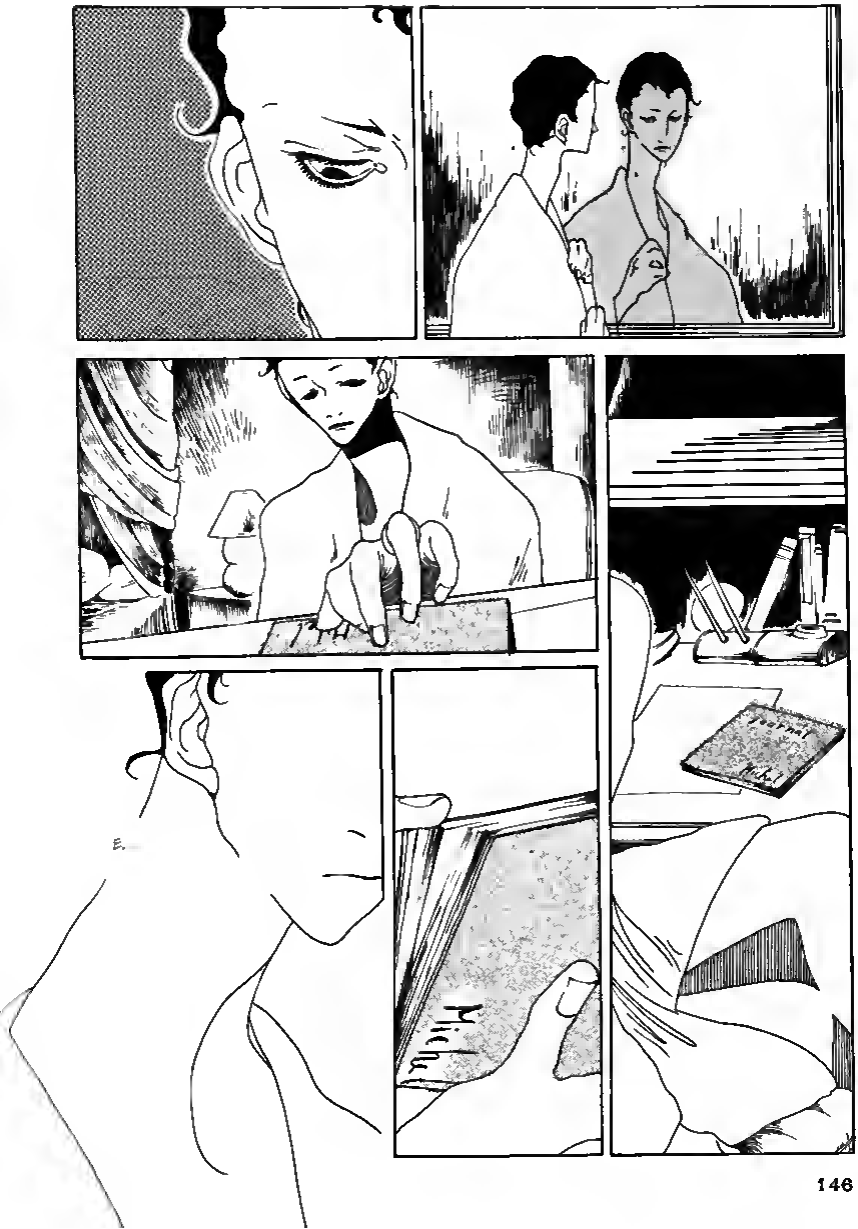

YOU'VE GOT...
SOME KIND OF PUNCTURE WOUND.
IT STANDS OUT AGAINST YOUR WHITE SKIN.
.....
...AH.
IT'S BEEN...
TREATED.
WITH POISON,
I'M SURE...

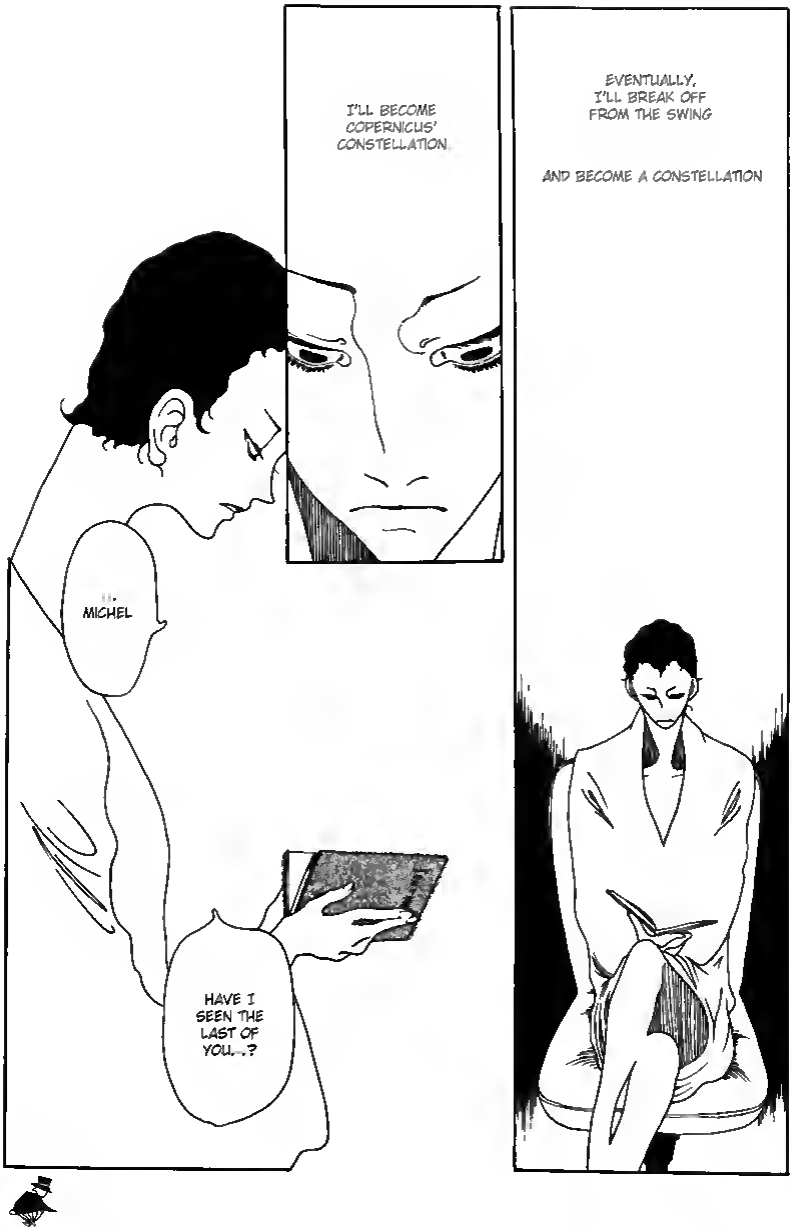

...OW!
NOW IT'S A WOUND I GAVE YOU.
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL.

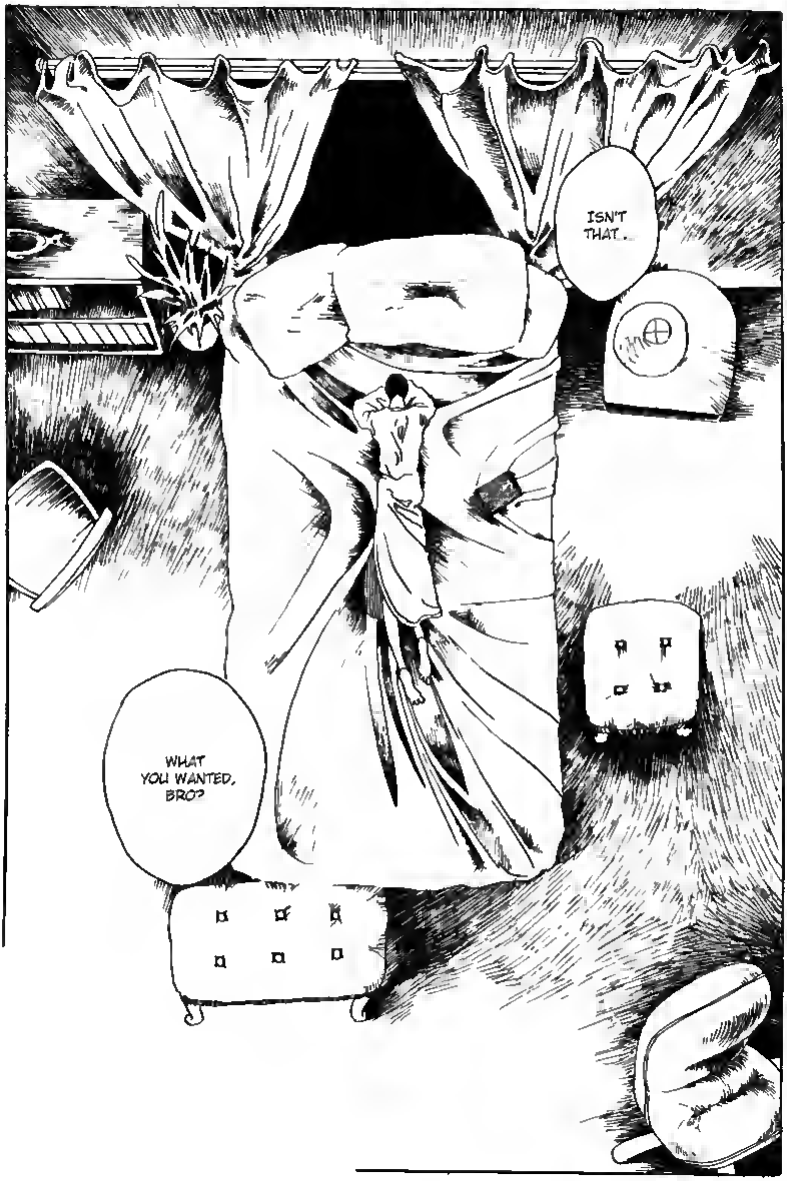

YOU'RE BEAU-TIFUL, TAKEO.


AH!
HAAH...
HAAH.
HAAH.
HAAH...
AAAH...!

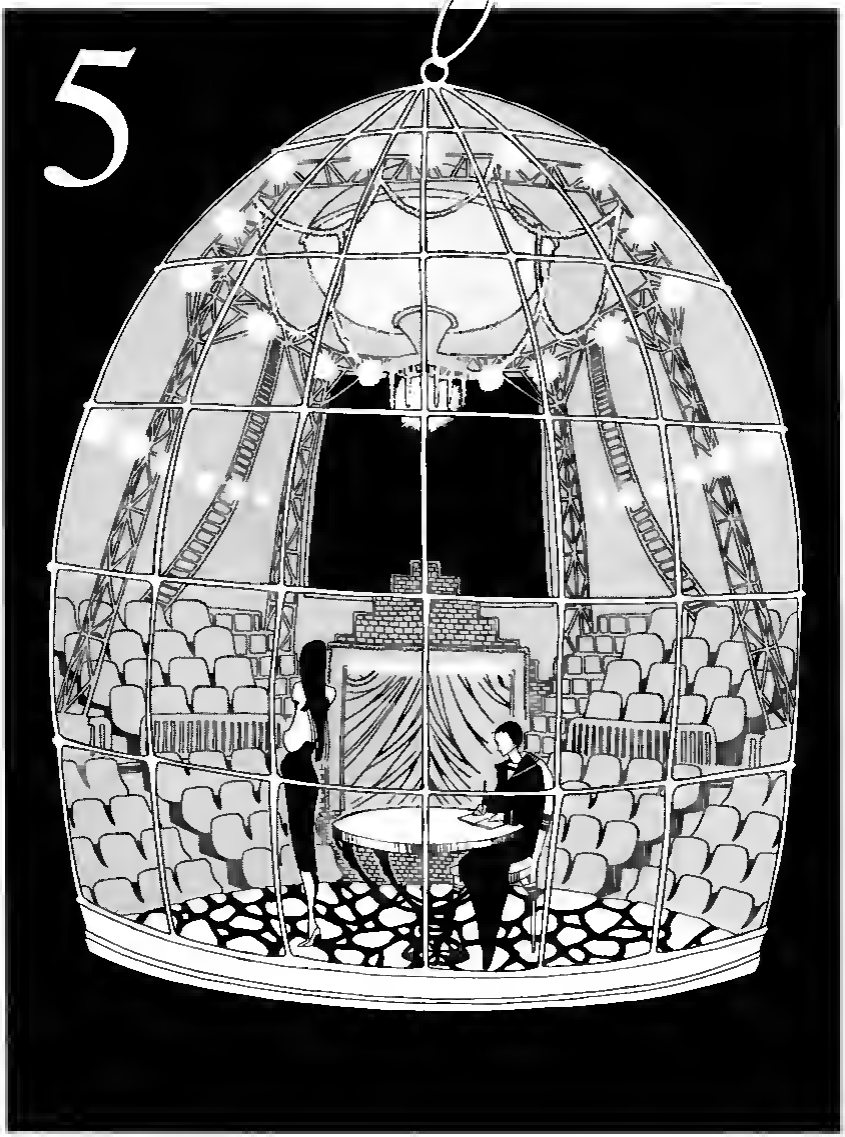

I'LL BE LEAVING EARLY
TOMOR-ROW...
I'LL COME SEE YOU EVERY WEEK-END.
GOOD NIGHT.
I LOVE YOU.


Journal
Michel
E.
Michel

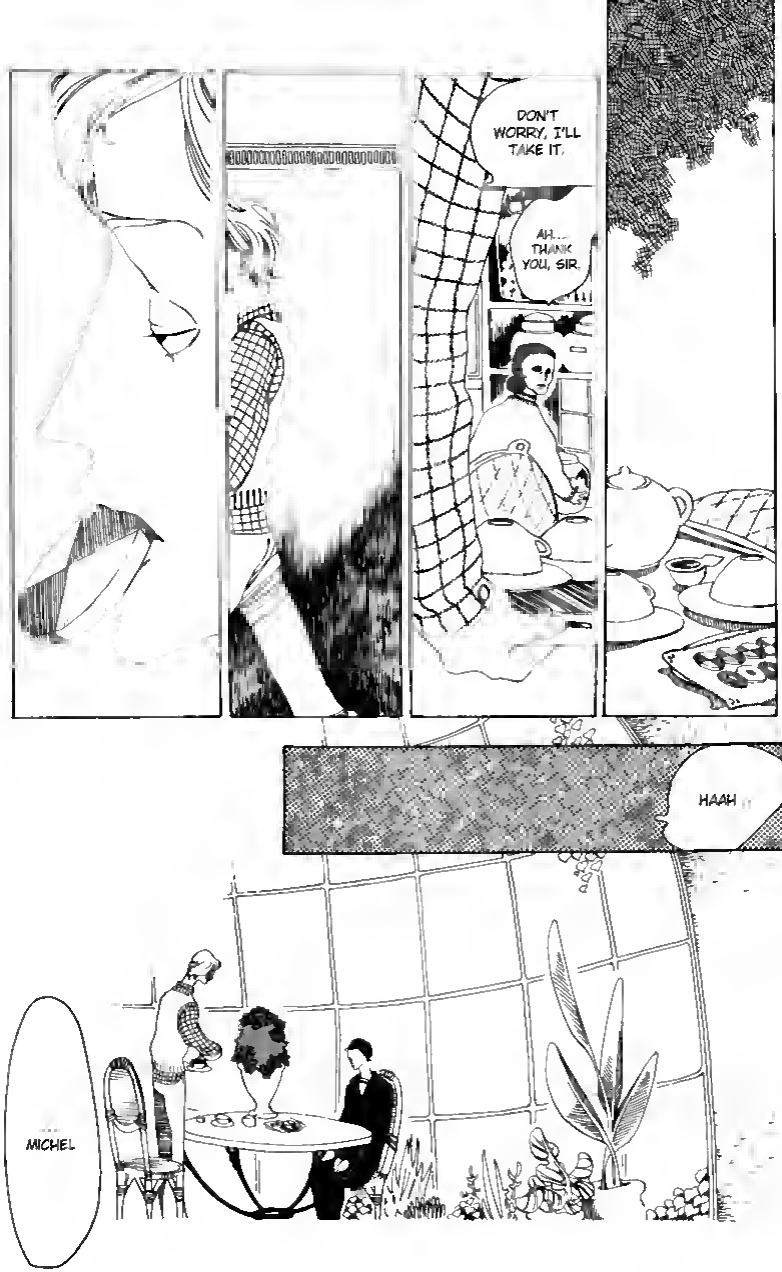

I'LL BECOME COPERNICUS' CONSTELLATION
EVENTUALLY, I'LL BREAK OFF FROM THE SWING
AND BECOME A CONSTELLATION
M. MICHEL
HAVE I SEEN THE LAST OF YOU...?



[End of chapter 4]


5

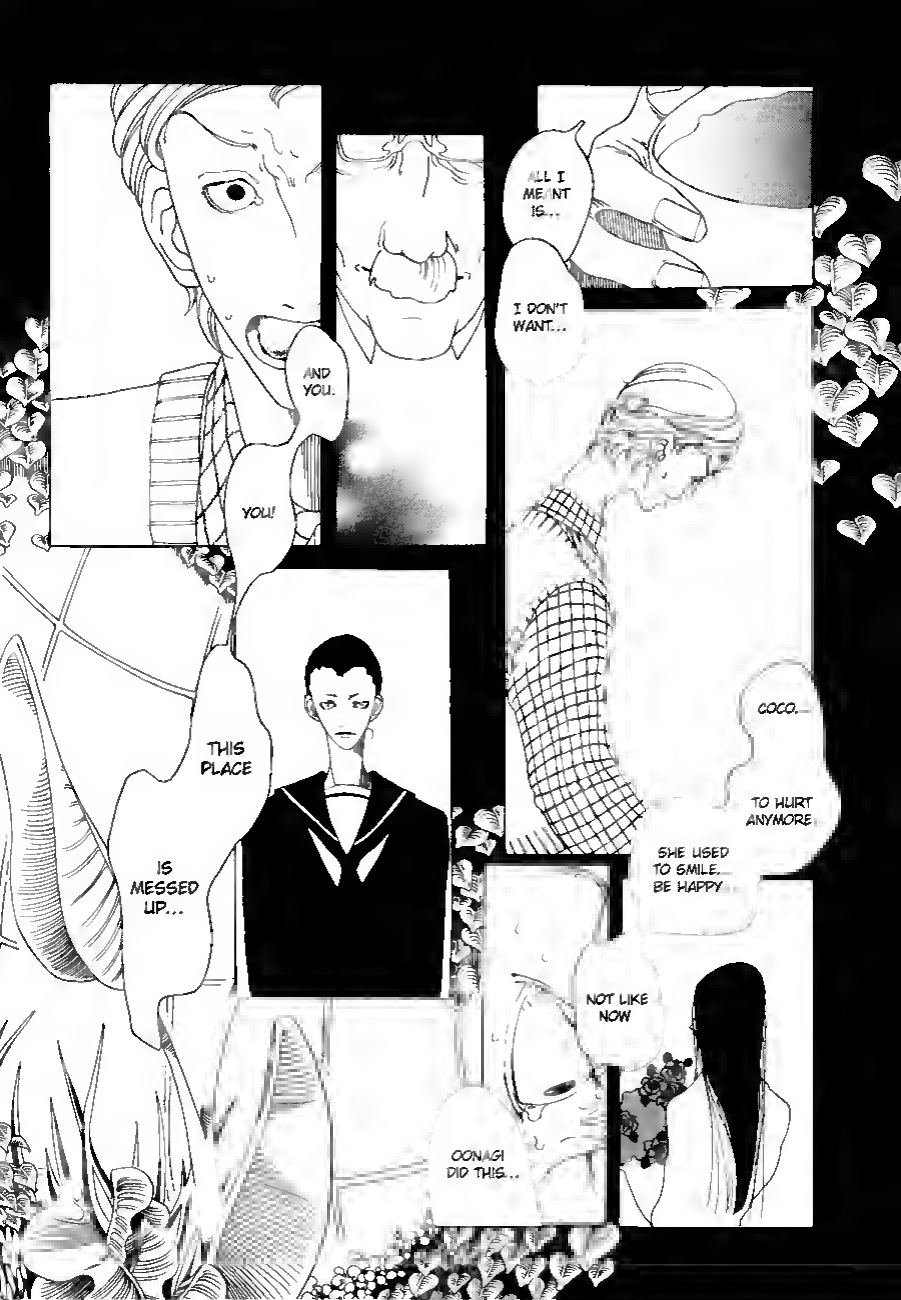

TAKEO
I DO BELIEVE IT'S BEEN ONE MONTH SINCE YOU CAME HERE
ONE MONTH SINCE I STARTED TEACHING YOU...
LOOK AGAIN.
THIS PART ISN'T "A".
IT'S "E".
...
SORRY.
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU?
YOU REALLY ARE USELESS.
SORRY.

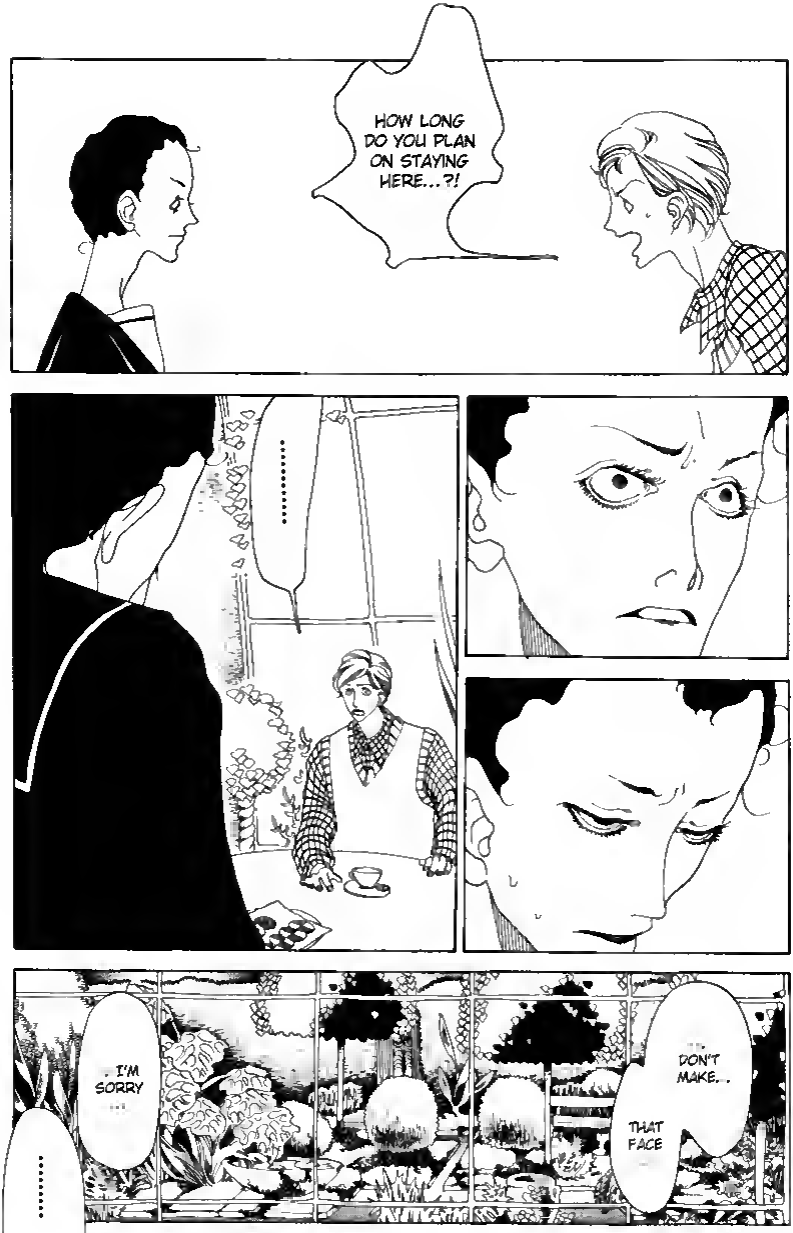

DON'T WORRY, I'LL TAKE IT.
AH... THANK YOU, SIR.
HAAH
MICHEL


.....
YEAH.
WELL, I MEAN...
I GUESS SO.
...THAT NAME MEANS "ANGEL", DOESN'T IT?
WHAT ABOUT YOUR NAME, TAKEO?
DON'T HEAR THAT ONE TOO OFTEN.
.....
OONAGI...


.....
MAKOTO GAVE IT TO ME
WHAT ARE YOU TO OONAGI -.?


WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?
...WHAT ARE YOU TO HIM?
WHY...
ARE YOU DOING THIS ...?
.....
THAT'S ... NOTHING I FEEL THE NEED TO HIDE...
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO...
HAVE TO ANSWER ...
YOU DON'T ...


ALL I MEANT IS...
I DON'T WANT...
COCO...
TO HURT ANYMORE
SHE USED TO SMILE. BE HAPPY
NOT LIKE NOW
OONAGI DID THIS...
AND YOU.
YOU!
THIS PLACE
IS MESSED UP...


HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN ON STAYING HERE...?!
.....
I'M SORRY...
.....
...DON'T MAKE... THAT FACE...


NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE
IT WAS NEVER YOUR BUSINESS
TO BEGIN WITH,
MICHEL.
HUH?!
I'M FINE WITH THINGS.
THIS IS MY WAY
OF LETTING MY BODY TO GROW STIFFER AND STIFFER,
TO WEAKEN, AND AGE
MORE AND MORE AND MORE


TO DRIFT APART FROM YOU, MICHEL
?
NO
ENOUGH OF THAT
MY MISTAKE
I NEVER KNEW
ANY "MICHEL"
TA-
TAKEO?
...AH...
THAT'S MY...
...AAAH
WHO'S MICHEL...?

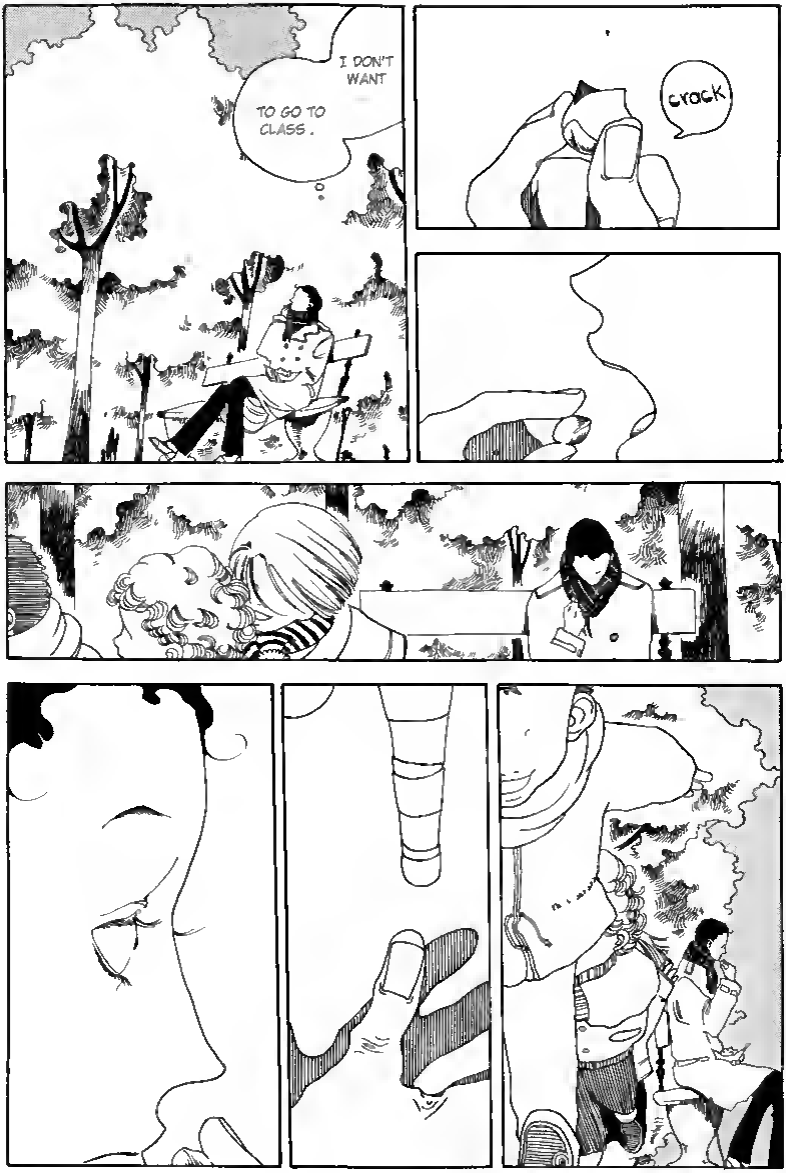

MY BROTHER'S NAME
MICHEL
...LILI!
HAAH
W...
WHY...


...DO YOU ALWAYS SUCK ON THE SAME SPOT...?
IT SHOWS
HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU
IT'S MY MARK
IT SHOWS
THAT YOU'RE MINE...

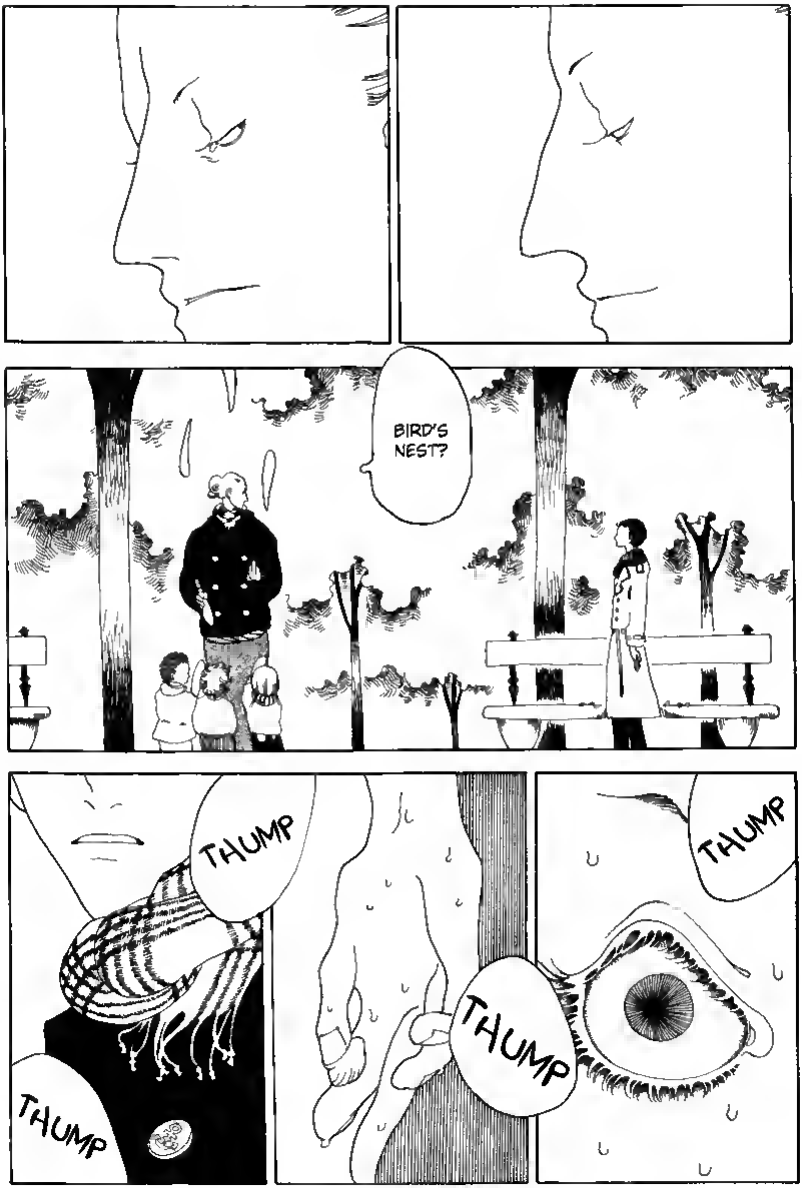

YOU..
THE REAL ME...?
AFTER ALL..
I KNOW.
THE REAL..


WHAT
CAN YOU CLAIM TO KNOW...?
.....
IT'S ABOUT TIME
WE PUT THOSE BROTHERS ON THE TRAPEZE...
I THINK IT'D BE GOOD FOR THE SHOW...
YES
I AGREE
NOW THEN.


LET'S SWITCH THAT AROUND.
THE YOUNGER ONE SHOULD BE THROWN.
WAIT.
SAY, TWO OR THREE
THEN THE OLDER GETS TOSSED..
HOW'S THIS?
THEY COME OUT AT THE SAME TIME,
AND STRIKE A FEW POSES SEPARATELY.
SO HE'S GOT NICER FORM IN THE AIR..
EH...? BUT...
THE OLDER ONE IS MORE FLEXIBLE,
YES, BUT...
HIS HAIR'S A PROBLEM.
BLONDE
HAS A BETTER VISUAL QUALITY TO IT.
LIKE
AN ANGEL
...

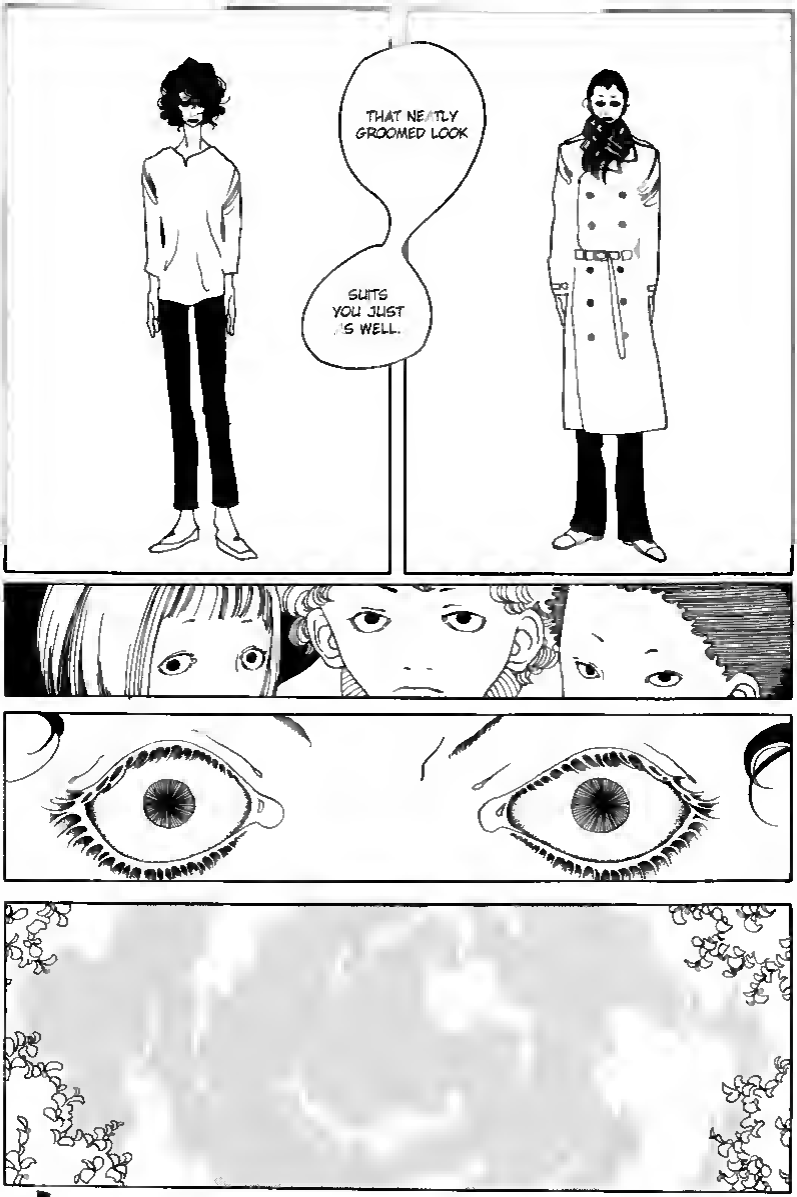

I DON'T WANT
TO GO TO CLASS.
CRACK

Le Monde
BATTLE


BIRD'S NEST?
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP


THAT YOU, BIRD'S NEST?
THUMP

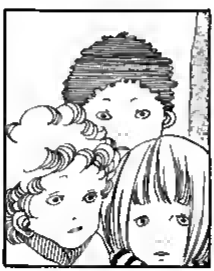

I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU AT FIRST
WITH YOUR HAIR SHORT.
YOU LOOK GOOD.
I MUST SAY

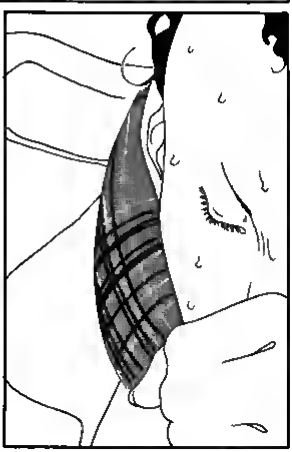

THAT NEATLY GROOMED LOOK
SUITS YOU JUST AS WELL.



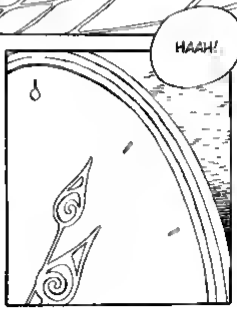


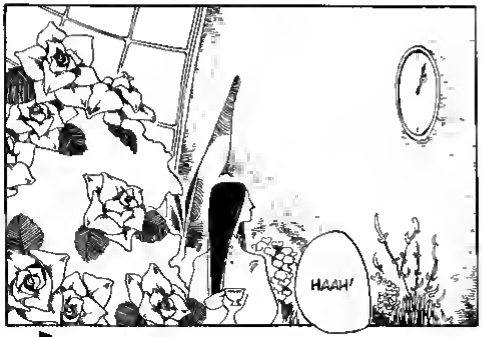


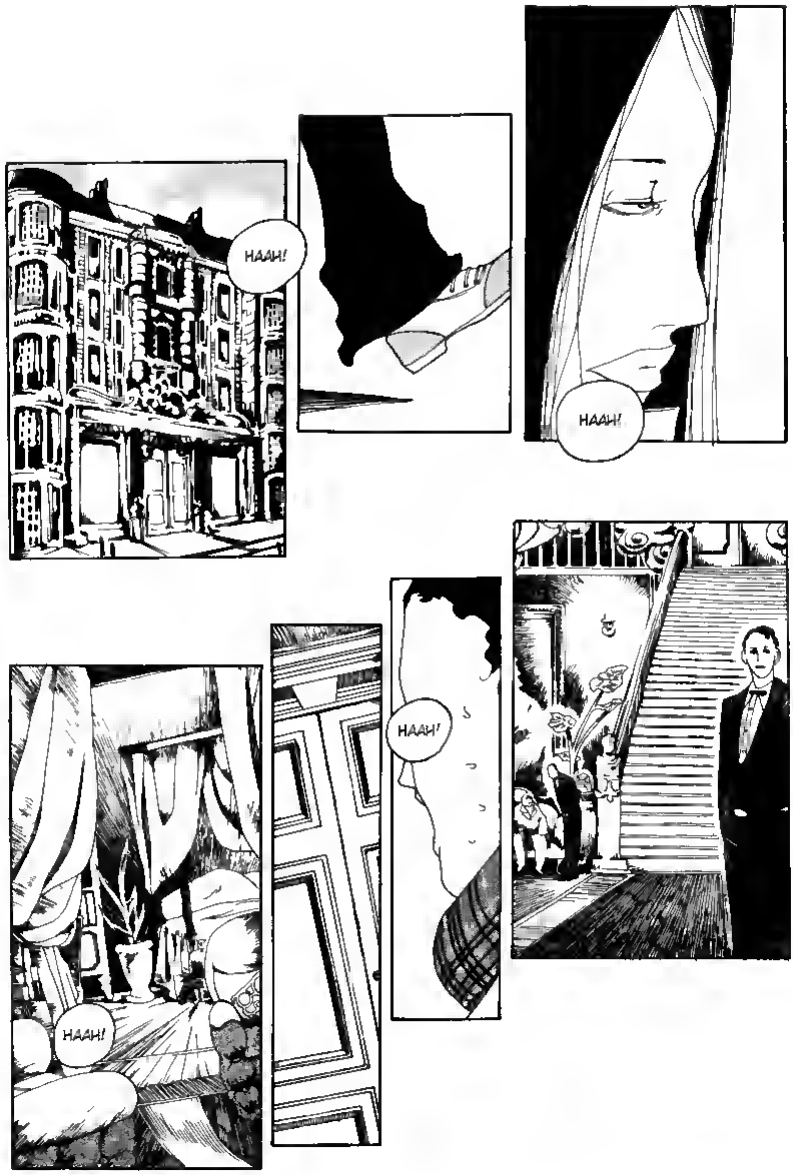





HAAH!
HAAH!
HAAH!
HAAH!


HAAH!


HAAH!

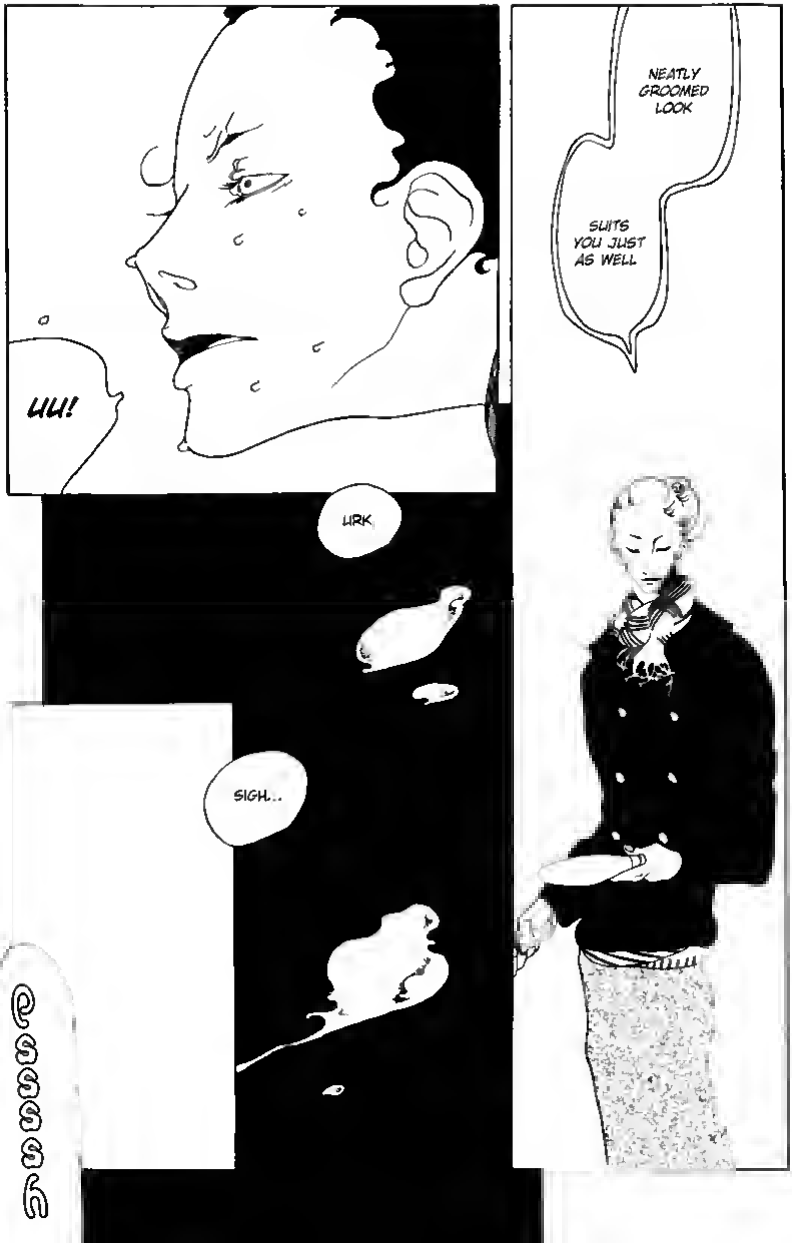

HAAH!
HAAH!
HAAH!
HAAH!


SLAM
HAAH!
HAAH!
SIGH...
LEO...

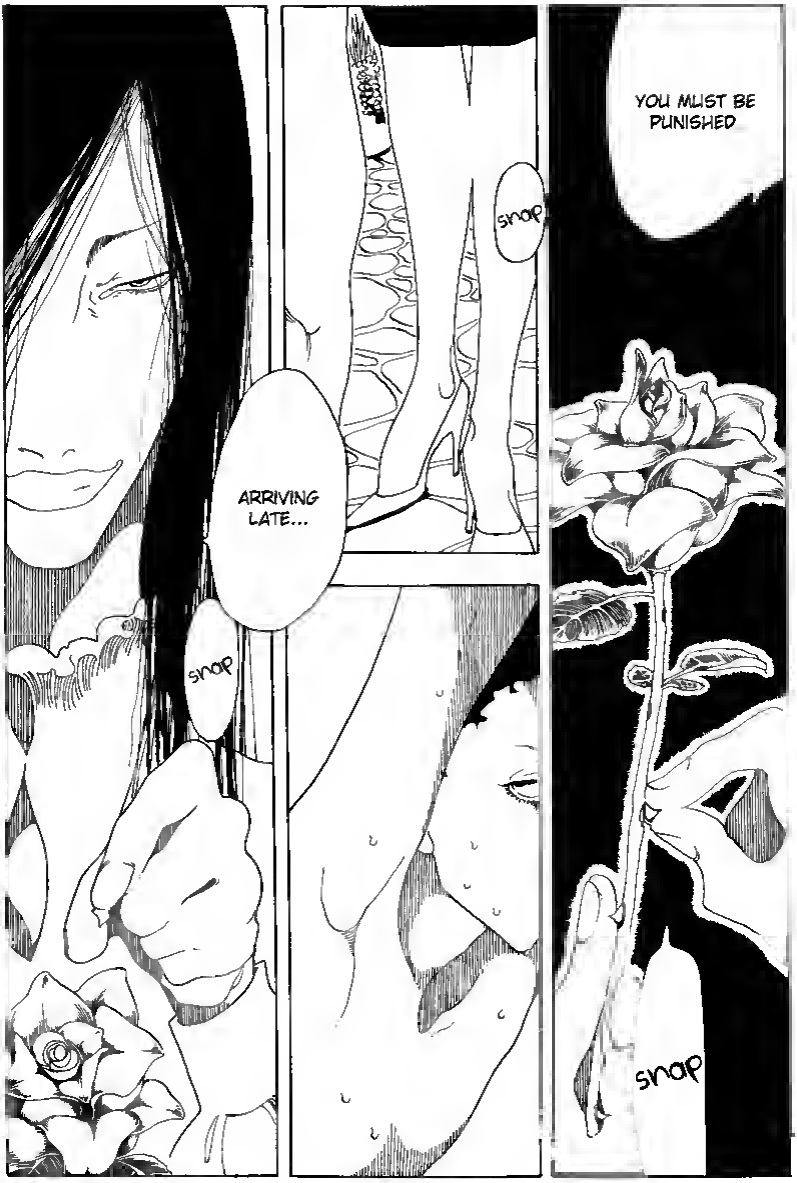

MM...
stare
ZIIIP
BIRD'S NEST?

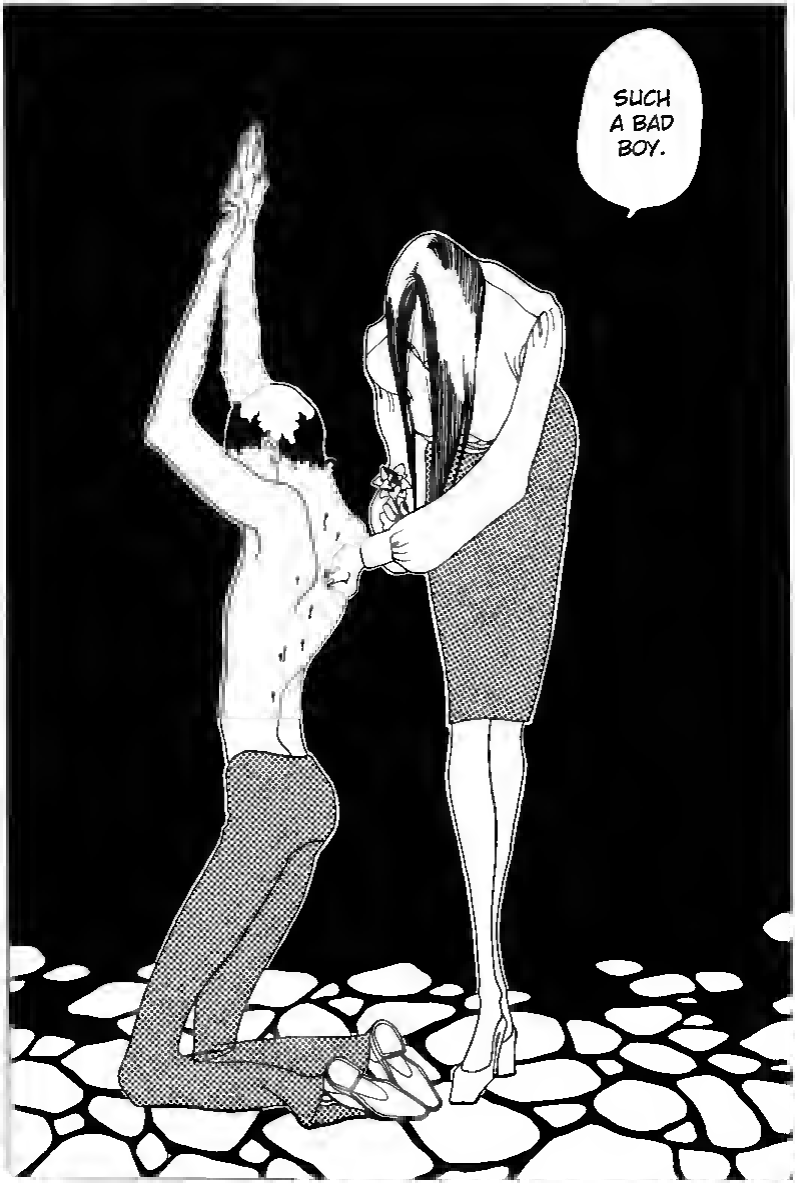

AH..!
THAT YOU, BIRD'S NEST?
HAAH..
I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU AT FIRST
WITH YOUR HAIR SHORT
AH!


HAAH!
AH!
YOU LOOK GOOD.
HAAH!
HAAH!
AH!
MM
I MUST SAY
THAT

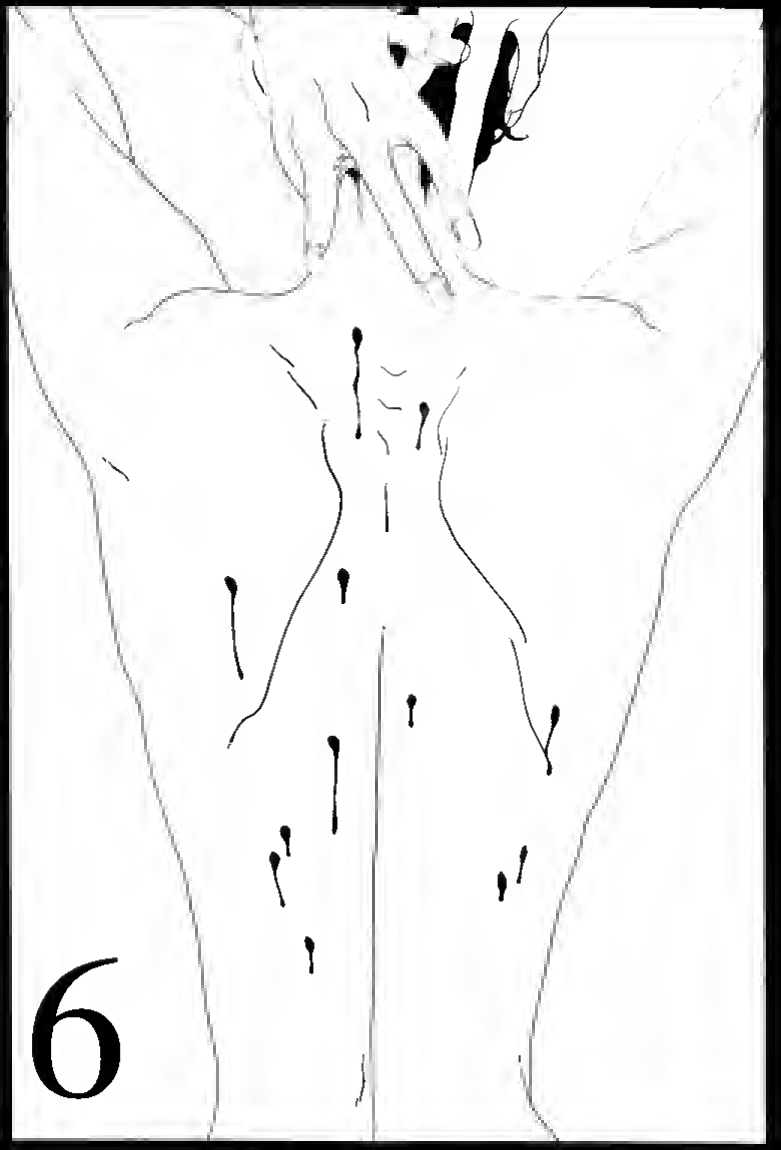

NEATLY GROOMED LOOK
SUITS YOU JUST AS WELL
UH!
HRK
SIGH...
SSSSSH

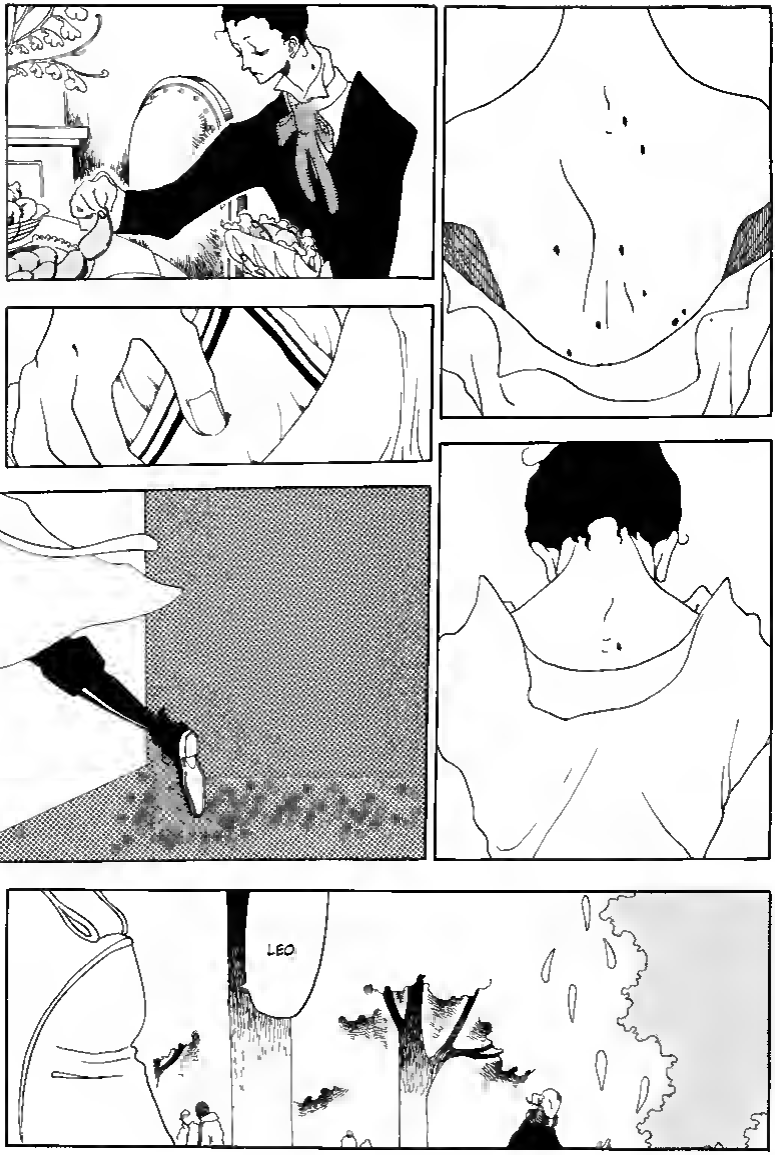

GGGGGG
GGGG
GGGGG
LEO..
I..
PUNISH-
MENT.

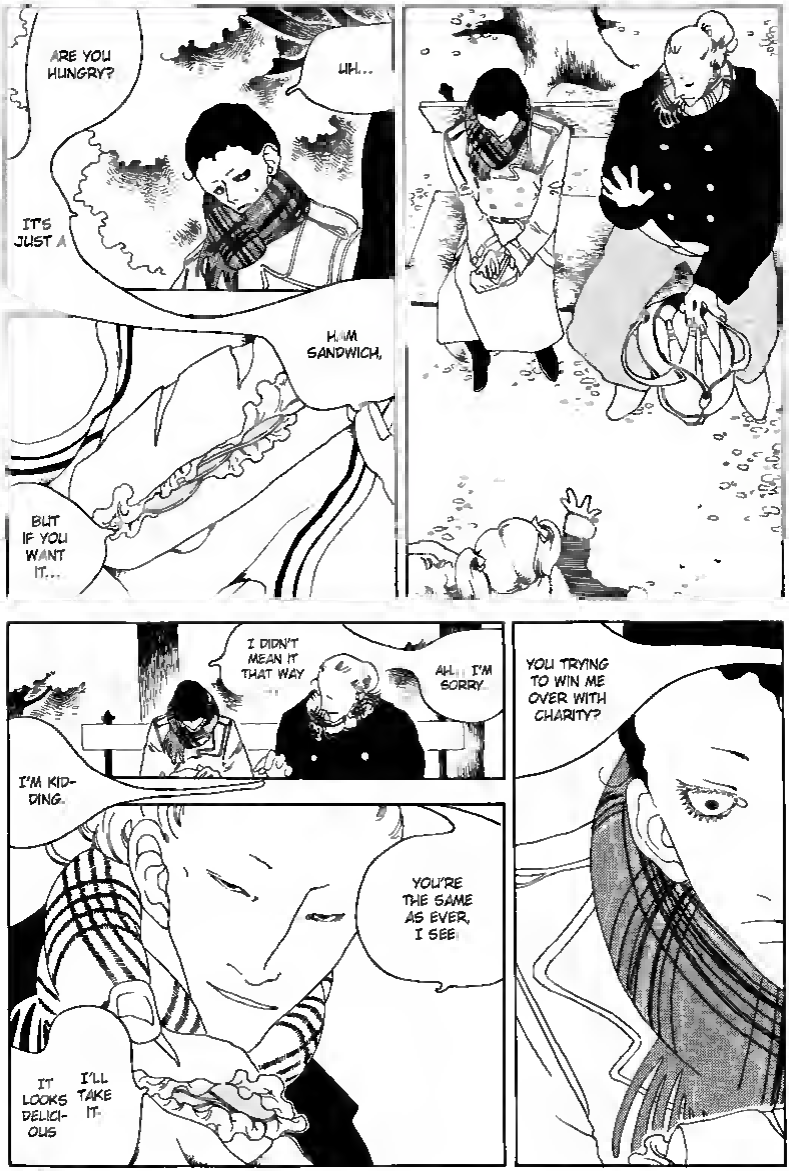

YOU MUST BE PUNISHED
snap
snap
ARRIVING LATE...
snap



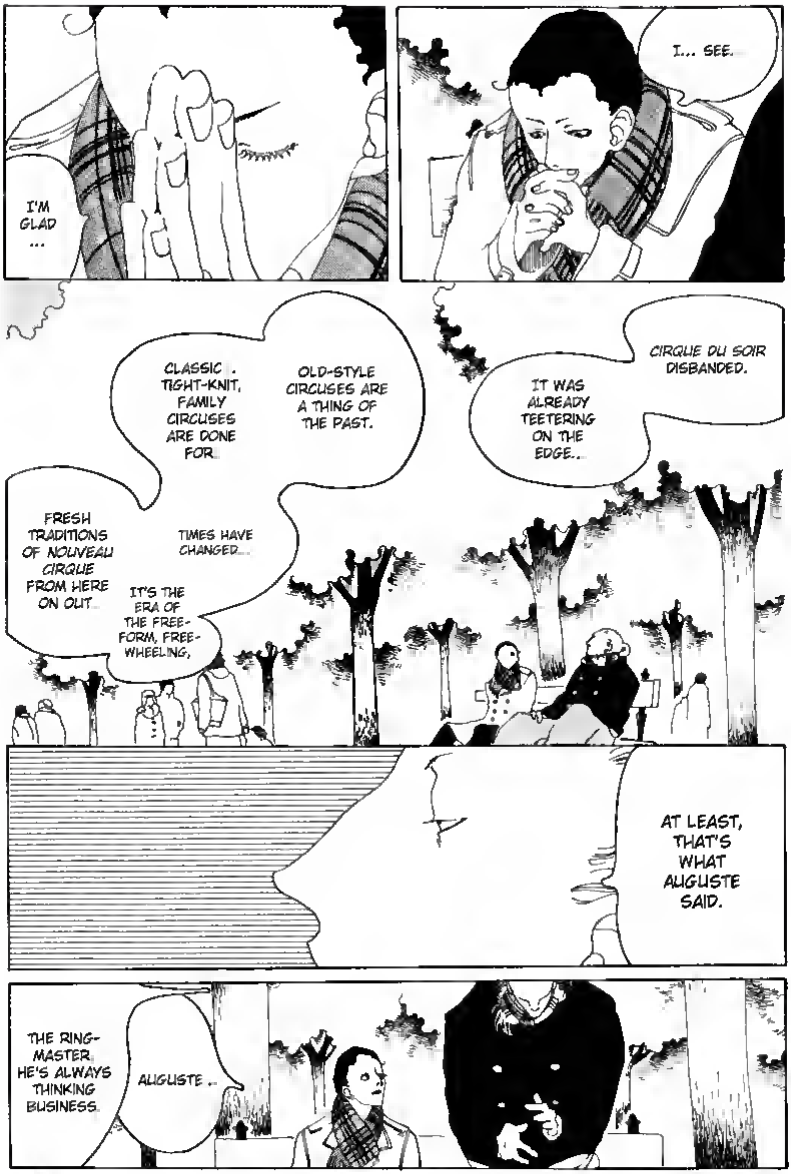
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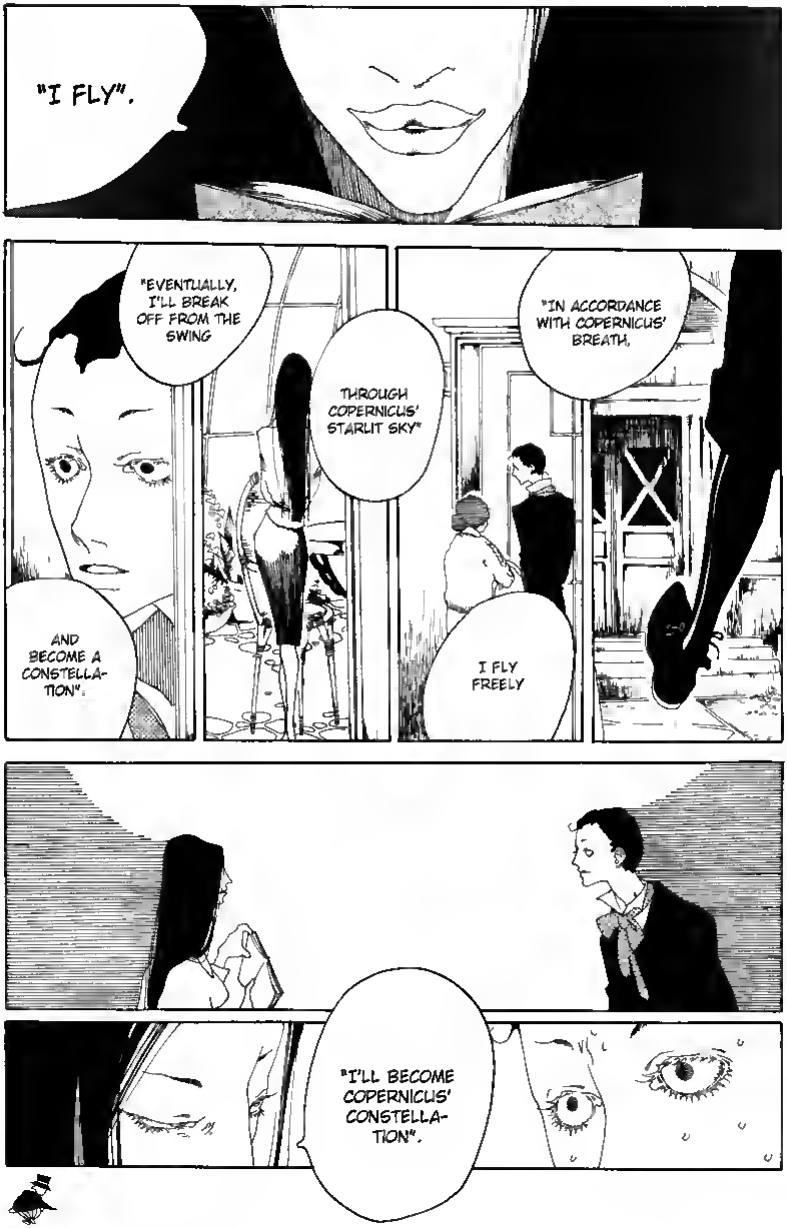

LEO


ARE YOU HUNGRY?
UH...
IT'S JUST A
HAM SANDWICH,
BUT IF YOU WANT IT...
I DIDN'T MEAN IT THAT WAY...
AH... I'M SORRY.
I'M KIDDING.
YOU'RE THE SAME AS EVER, I SEE.
IT LOOKS DELICIOUS
I'LL TAKE IT.
YOU TRYING TO WIN ME OVER WITH CHARITY?


MINA'S ALIVE.
BUT...
HER LIMBS ARE PRETTY MESSED UP.
APPARENTLY, SHE WANTS TO OPEN UP A SCHOOL FOR THE CIRCUS ARTS.
SHE'S ONE TOUGH GIRL.
SHE'LL NEVER FLY THE TRAPEZE AGAIN


I'M GLAD ...
I... SEE.
CIRQUE DU SOIR DISBANDED.
IT WAS ALREADY TEETERING ON THE EDGE..
CLASSIC . TIGHT-KNIT, FAMILY CIRCUSES ARE DONE FOR.
OLD-STYLE CIRCUSES ARE A THING OF THE PAST.
FRESH TRADITIONS OF NOUVEAU CIRQUE FROM HERE ON OUT.
TIMES HAVE CHANGED...
IT'S THE ERA OF THE FREE-FORM, FREE-WHEELING,
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT AUGUSTE SAID.
THE RING-MASTER. HE'S ALWAYS THINKING BUSINESS.
AUGUSTE ..

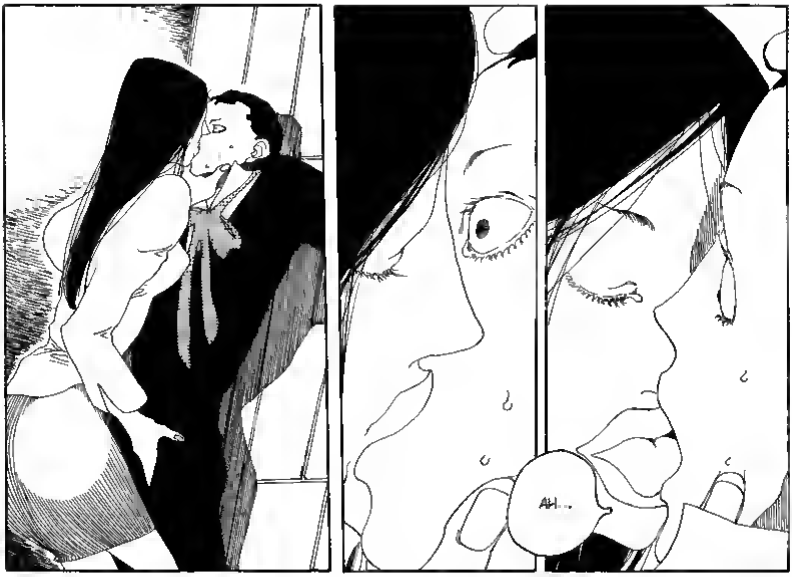

THAT WAS GREAT
ALL DONE
THANKS
I'M ALWAYS..
JUGGLING HERE OR NEXT TO LES HALLES IN THE MORNING...
EVENINGS ARE SPENT REHEARSING WITH MY CURRENT CIRCUS...
OR WORKING MY PART-TIME JOB
COME WATCH,
IF THE MOOD EVER STRIKES
NEXT TIME, GET ME SOME EXTRA MUSTARD
...


"I FLY".
"EVENTUALLY, I'LL BREAK OFF FROM THE SWING
THROUGH COPERNICUS' STARLIT SKY"
"IN ACCORDANCE WITH COPERNICUS' BREATH,
AND BECOME A CONSTELLATION".
I FLY FREELY
"I'LL BECOME COPERNICUS' CONSTELLATION".


MICHEL...
IS THAT YOUR REAL NAME?
IT'S NOT MY NAME.
NO
IT'S MY BROTHER'S.


THEN THAT MUST BE A MEMENTO TO REMEMBER HIM BY.
I GET IT.
I, TOO, WOULD CARRY AROUND A KEEPSAKE
IF MY DEAR MICHEL WERE EVER TO DIE
HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO LOVES ME.
THE ONLY ONE.
ONLY HIM.
STOP IT.
I'M SICK OF YOUR MISERABLE WHINING.
DO I HAVE TO SPELL IT OUT FOR YOU?
YOU
REVEL IN YOUR OWN EMOTIONAL PAIN
YOU'RE HIGH ON YOUR OWN MISFORTUNE.
WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO...?
WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO...?


YOU LOVE IT.
GRAB
WHAT GARBAGE ARE YOU SPILLING OUT OF THAT MOUTH OF YOURS THIS TIME?

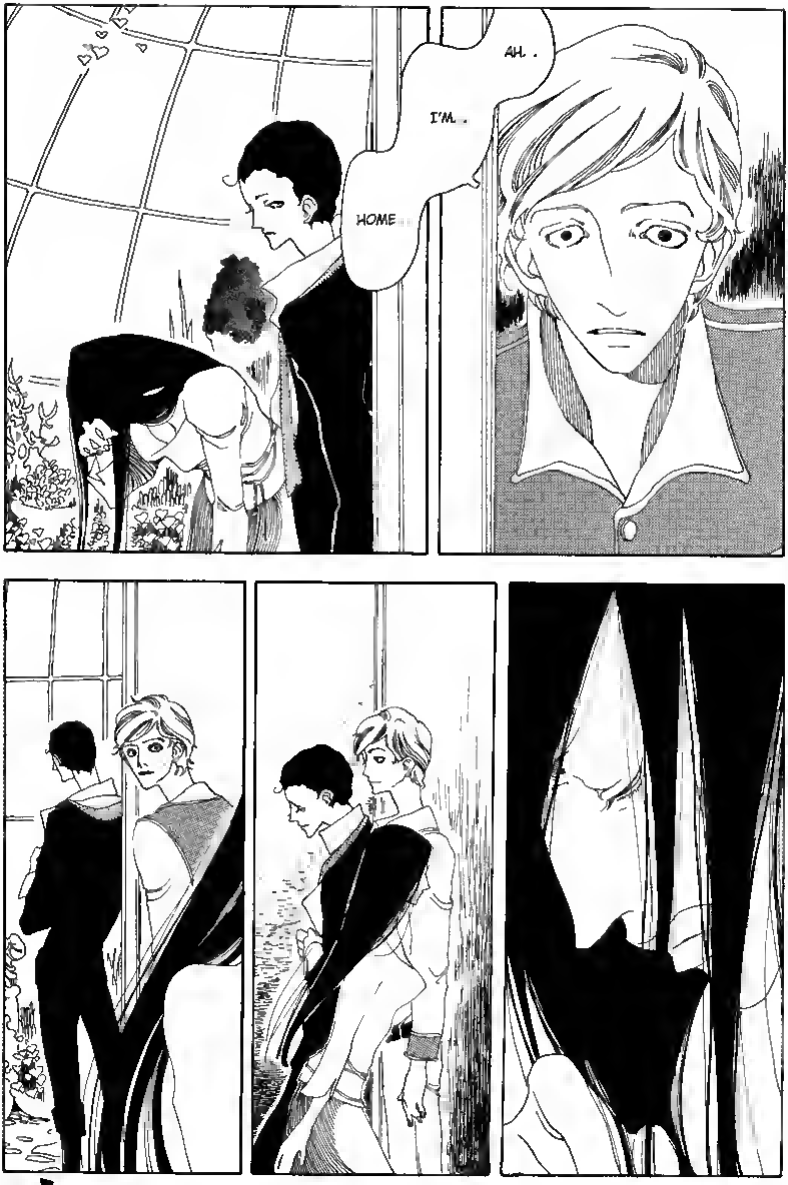

AH...


HEY,
JUST LIKE OONAGI, RIGHT?


WE KISS THE SAME, DON'T WE?
I LEARNED FROM HIM.
HEHE
OONAGI LOVES WHITE SKIN
YOUR SKIN IS BEAUTIFUL.
ANYONE IS FINE.
SO LONG AS THEY HAVE WHITE SKIN
ANYONE AT ALL
CUTS
WHEN A WOUND OPENS ON WHITE SKIN,
HE'LL ALWAYS PRAISE IT AS BEAUTIFUL.


PLEASE STOP...
HEY.
YOU'RE SO HARD... IT FEELS GOOD, RIGHT?
YOU'RE GLISTENING AND PINK AS A ROSE
YOU MUST REALLY LOVE THIS DIRTY BOY .
.....
I WISH YOU WOULD DIE!
YOU'RE FILTH!
I WISH YOU WOULD DIE!
knock
knock

RA
TTLE
...


AH.
I'M.
HOME.


.....
I BE-
LIEVE MY
STUDIES
ARE DONE
FOR THE
DAY--
WELCOME
BACK
WHAT
WERE YOU
DOING?

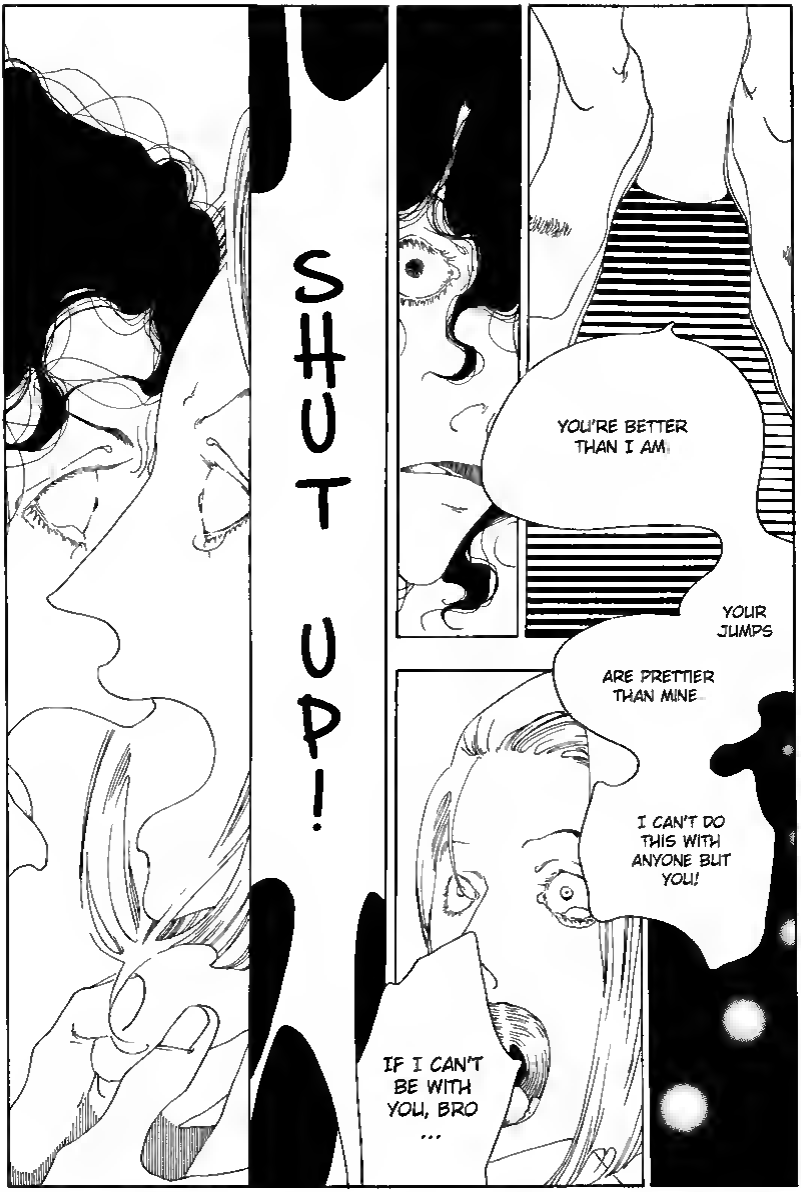

WHAT WERE YOU DOING
WITH COCO..?
WE'RE A LOT ALIKE
WE JUST DIDN'T KNOW IT.
I ASKED WHAT YOU WERE DOING ...!


YOU...
ARE YOU FINE WITH JUST ANYONE?
WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY?
I'M NOT ANG...
WITH ANY-THING?!

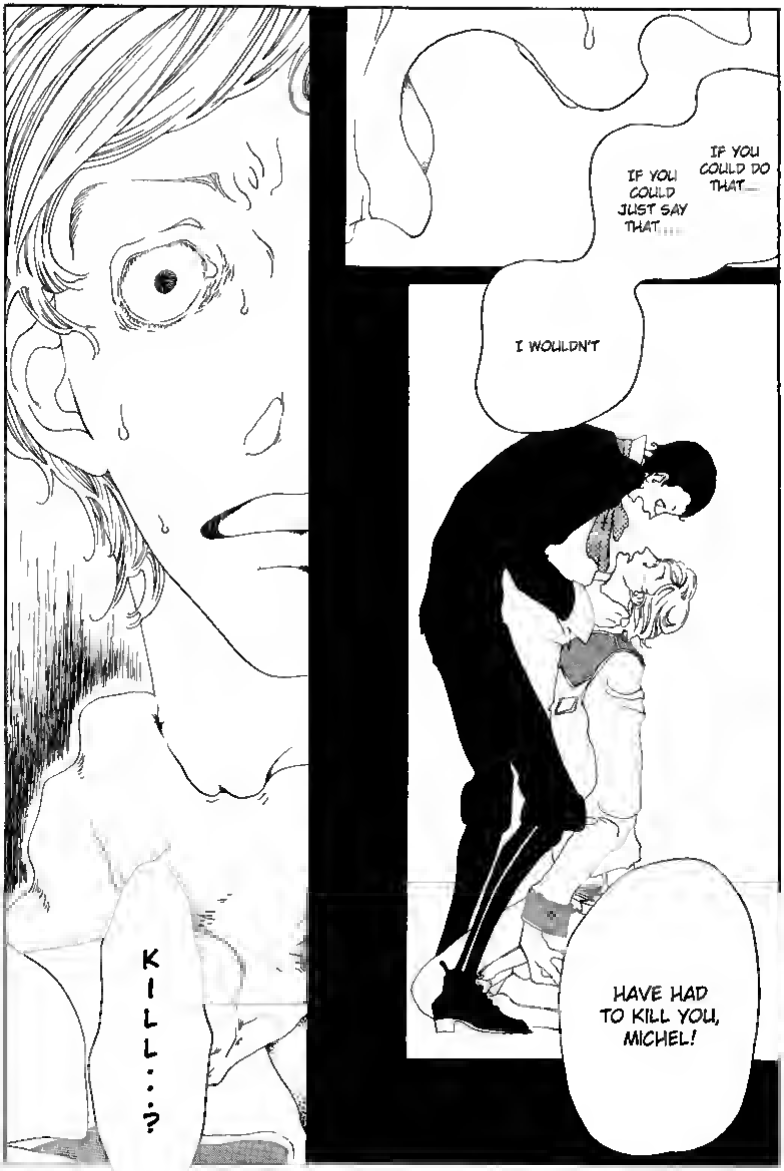

MPH.
MM.
ISN'T THIS WHAT YOU WANTED?


YOU PUT ON THE INNOCENT, GOODY TWO-SHOES ACT.
YET YOU ENTICE ME.
YOU WANTED ME TO LAY MY HANDS ON YOU, RIGHT?
BE-CAUSE
NO.
I
JUST.


I LOVE YOUR TRAPEZE..
SO LONG
I WANT TO PERFORM AS A TEAM..
DON'T WANT YOU TO LEAVE...
I'LL NEVER BE THE ONE TO FLY
AS I'M WITH YOU,
NO!
YOU SHOULD BE THE ONE TO FLY!

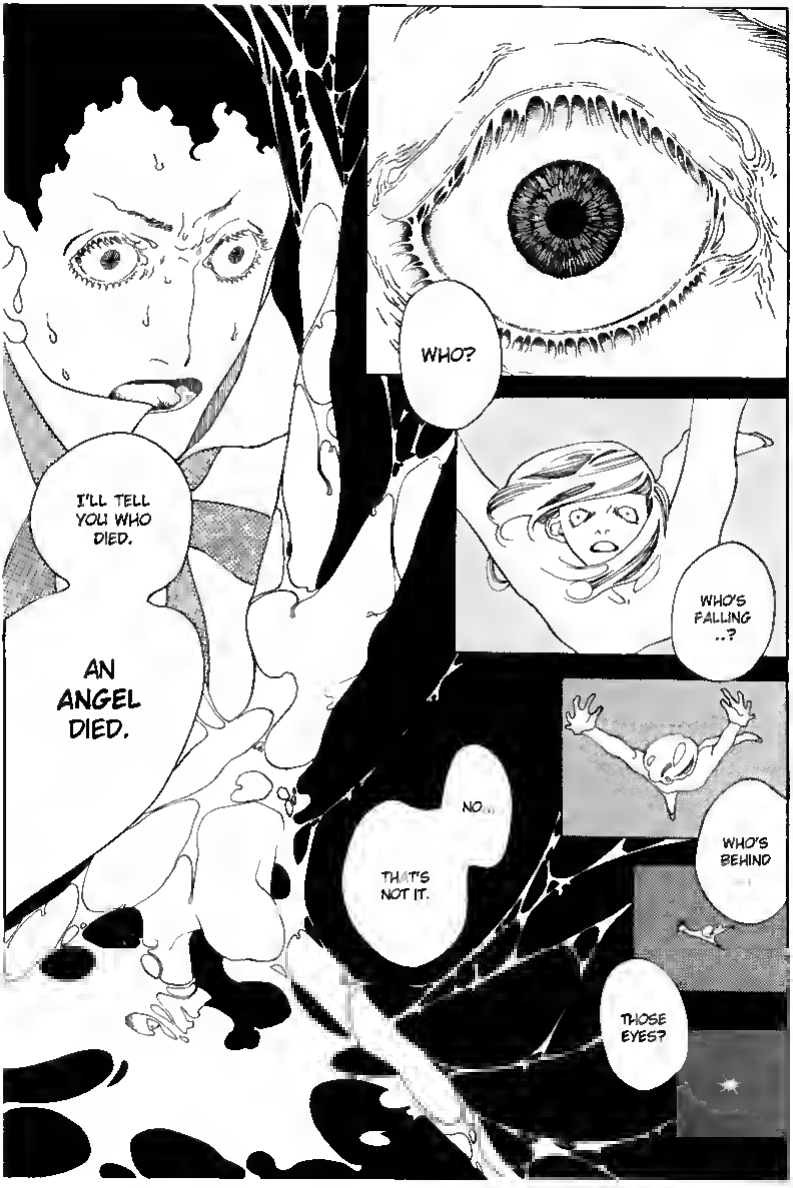

SHUT UP!
YOU'RE BETTER THAN I AM.
YOUR JUMPS ARE PRETTIER THAN MINE
I CAN'T DO THIS WITH ANYONE BUT YOU!
IF I CAN'T BE WITH YOU, BRO ...


BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF.
YOU REALLY DO WANT TO FLY.
TELL THE TRUTH!


IF YOU COULD DO THAT...
IF YOU COULD JUST SAY THAT...
I WOULDN'T
HAVE HAD TO KILL YOU, MICHEL!
KILL...?


IT WAS
PAINFULLY SLOW
OUR EYES MET
LIKE PLAYING A MOVIE FRAME-BY-FRAME
THE ENTIRE TIME.
I WAS SUCKED SLOWLY INTO DARK-NESS .
YES
I'M SURE OF IT.


I SOMETIMES FIND MYSELF WONDERING,
WHO DIED THAT DAY...?
EVEN NOW
.....
WE FACED EACH OTHER FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME
AND THEN ...
WE


WHO?
I'LL TELL YOU WHO DIED.
AN ANGEL DIED.
WHO'S FALLING ..?
NO...
THAT'S NOT IT.
WHO'S BEHIND
THOSE EYES?


MICHEL...!
GAH!
AH!


HAAH
HAAH
HAAH
I...
I...
I WON'T DIE!


...
I...



à suivre…

Read from left to right.

CIRQUE

The French word for circus is cirque. It's pronounced with a rising intonation.



Three years ago, I saw the Bombay Circus in southern India.

Sitting in that empty room, watching that second-rate performance, I thought to myself there was no way they could stay in business unless there was some prostitution happening on the side or something.

Now here I am, three years later, drawing a manga about a circus mired in prostitution.

I don't know if circuses were ever really a front for prostitution.

But much like Japanese Kabuki, which really was such a front at one point, I can't help but think that the makeup and nature of the performances had the added benefit of showcasing the "goods"

Follow the gloved hands.

Saltimbanco

The circus, an art form created by traveling performers, began taking its current form in the 18th century. The earliest acts were displays of horsemanship performed in a circus-style ring

Gradually acts such as acrobatics, tightrope walking, and clowning were added to create the (traditional) circuses we think of today.

Many different circus groups were formed, and circuses entered a Golden Age supported by the bourgeoisie.

However, with the rise of capitalism circuses proved to be unprofitable and fell into decline.

It was under these conditions that circuses began to change their image bringing in elements of dance and theater. Thus, **nouveau cirque** was born.

This tale is set in the '70s, right as circuses were transitioning from old to new

Those who want to know more about circuses should refer to Morita Hiroko's book **Circus**, published by Bunyusha



初出

『マンガ・エロティクス・エフ』太田出版
2001年VOL.7～VOL.12, 2002年VOL.13

参考文献
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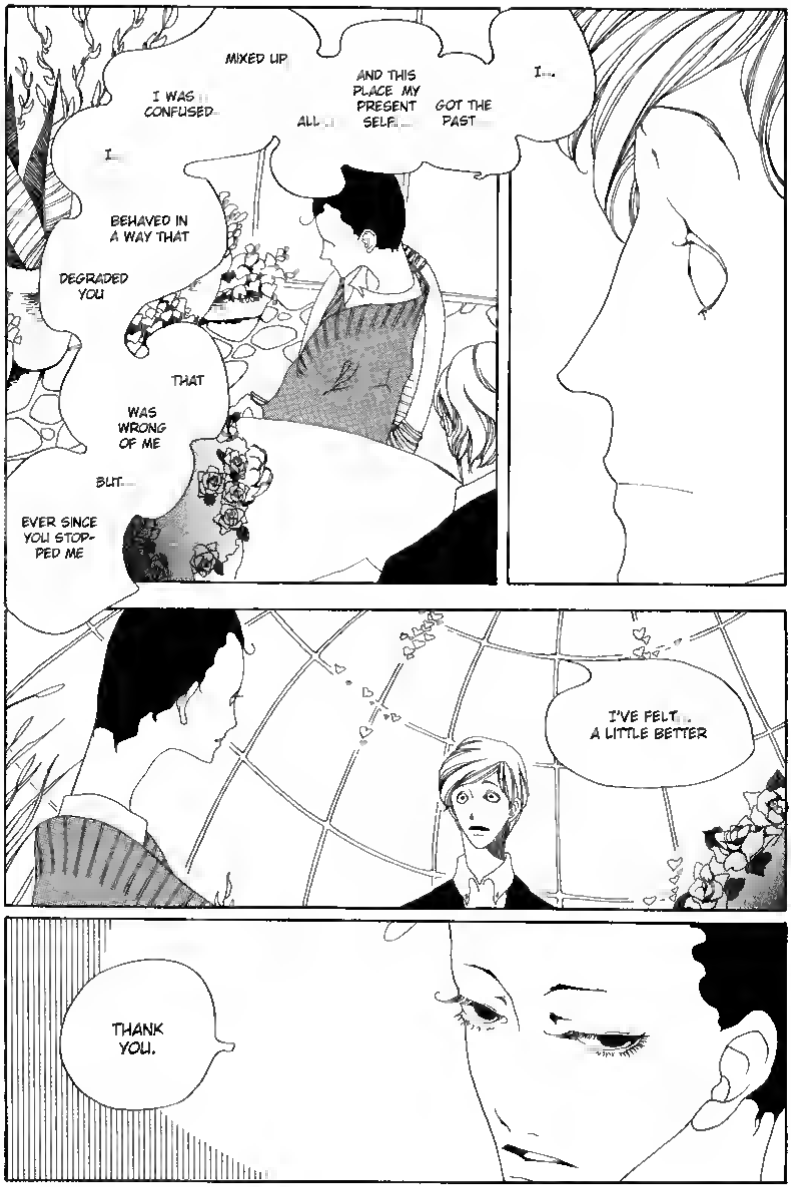

HERE...
IT STARTS THE DAY AFTER TO-MORROW
INVITE A FRIEND
AND COME WATCH
IF YOU'D LIKE.
IT'S A CLICHED SHOW,
PARKING


BUT I HOPE YOU ENJOY IT
YOU'VE
BEEN LATE A LOT RECENTLY
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN WANDERING OFF TO?


NOWHERE
I'M SIMPLY NOT A MORNING PERSON
SO I HAVE TROUBLE GETTING UP.
YOU SEEM
HAPPY LATELY,
TAKEO
CIRQUE SANTÉ
PARKING DU
AS THOUGH
YOU'VE BEEN SWEPT OFF YOUR FEET.



Kaiela: You need to give up RIGHT NOW, good sir.
If you can't answer something as simple as "red fruit that grows in threes" in your native goddamn tongue, then you fail at crosswords forever. ♭

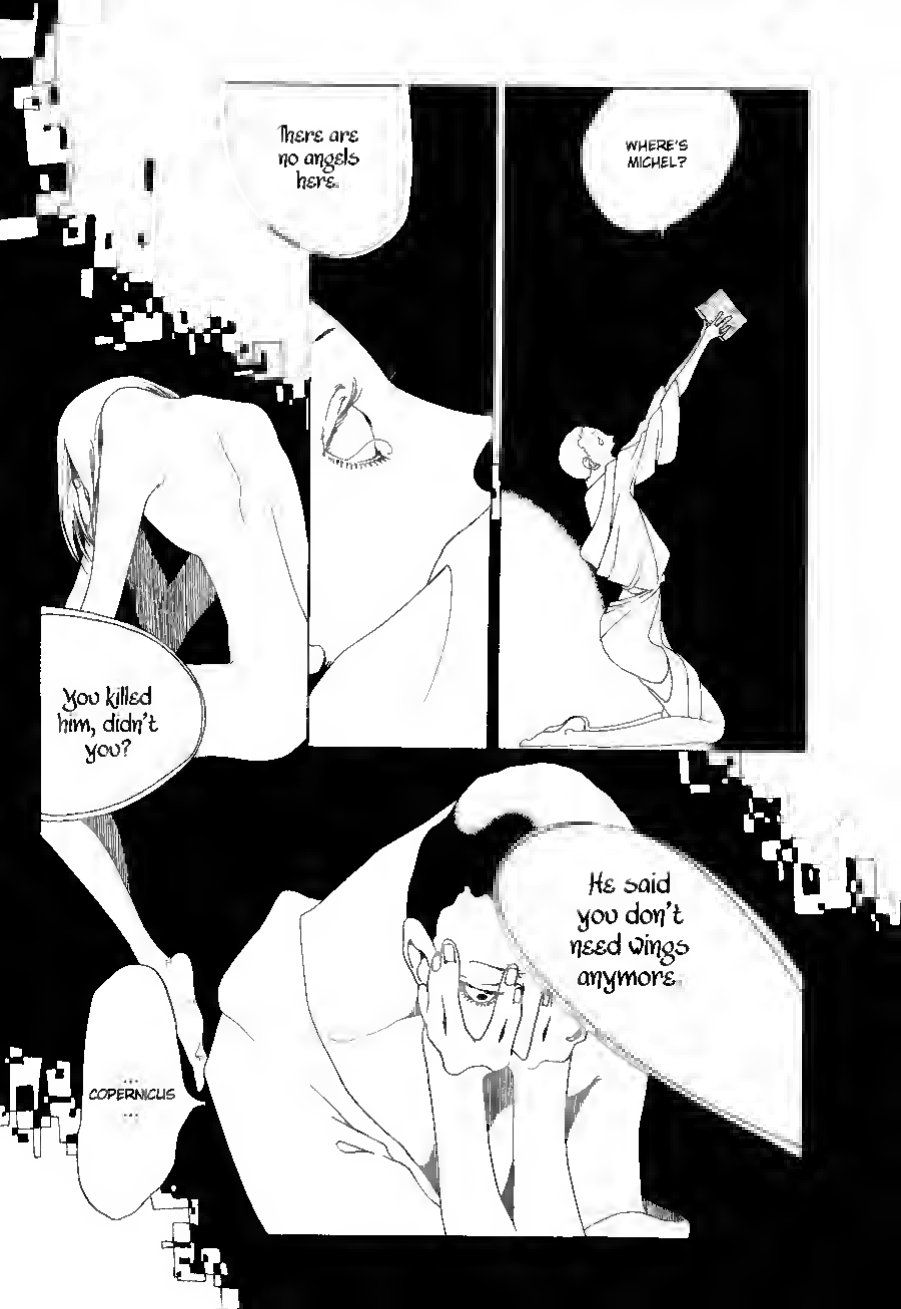

I...
MIXED UP
I WAS CONFUSED
AND THIS PLACE MY PRESENT SELF... ALL...
GOT THE PAST
I...
BEHAVED IN A WAY THAT
DEGRADED YOU
THAT
WAS WRONG OF ME
BUT...
EVER SINCE YOU STOPPED ME
I'VE FELT... A LITTLE BETTER
THANK YOU.


CAN I KISS YOU?
HM?
UM...
CLONK
EVEN A TINY BIT IS FINE...
SURE

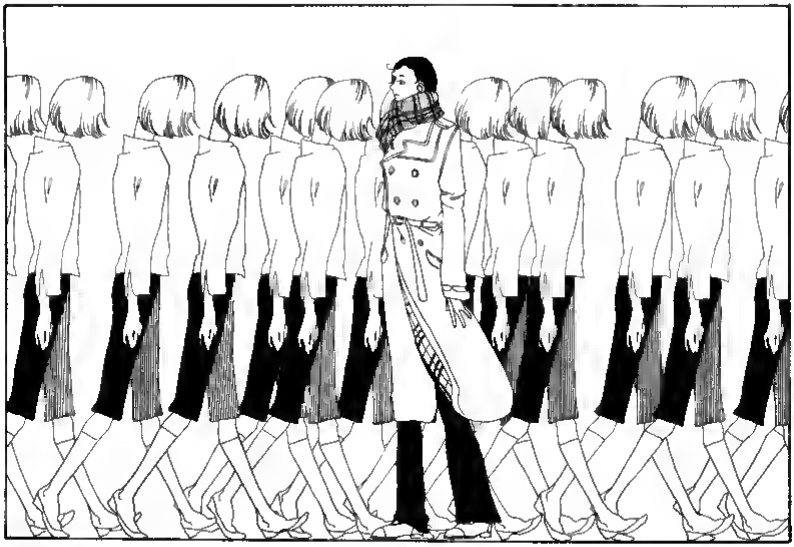

.....
...AH
HEY.
ARE YOU FREE THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW?

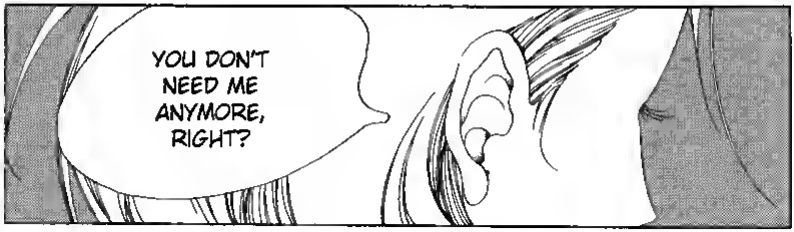

THIS ISN'T ME
Hessy now.
You have no right to complain

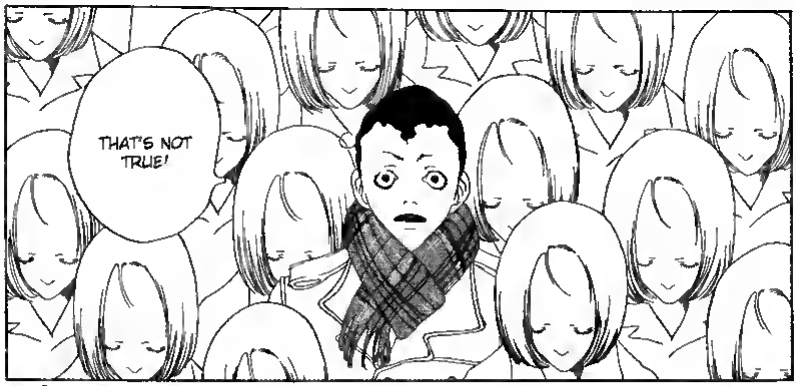

You have no right to complain.
You chose falling to earth
After all,
over the sky of wormhole stars.
You
don't live in our world
any longer
AND MICHEL?

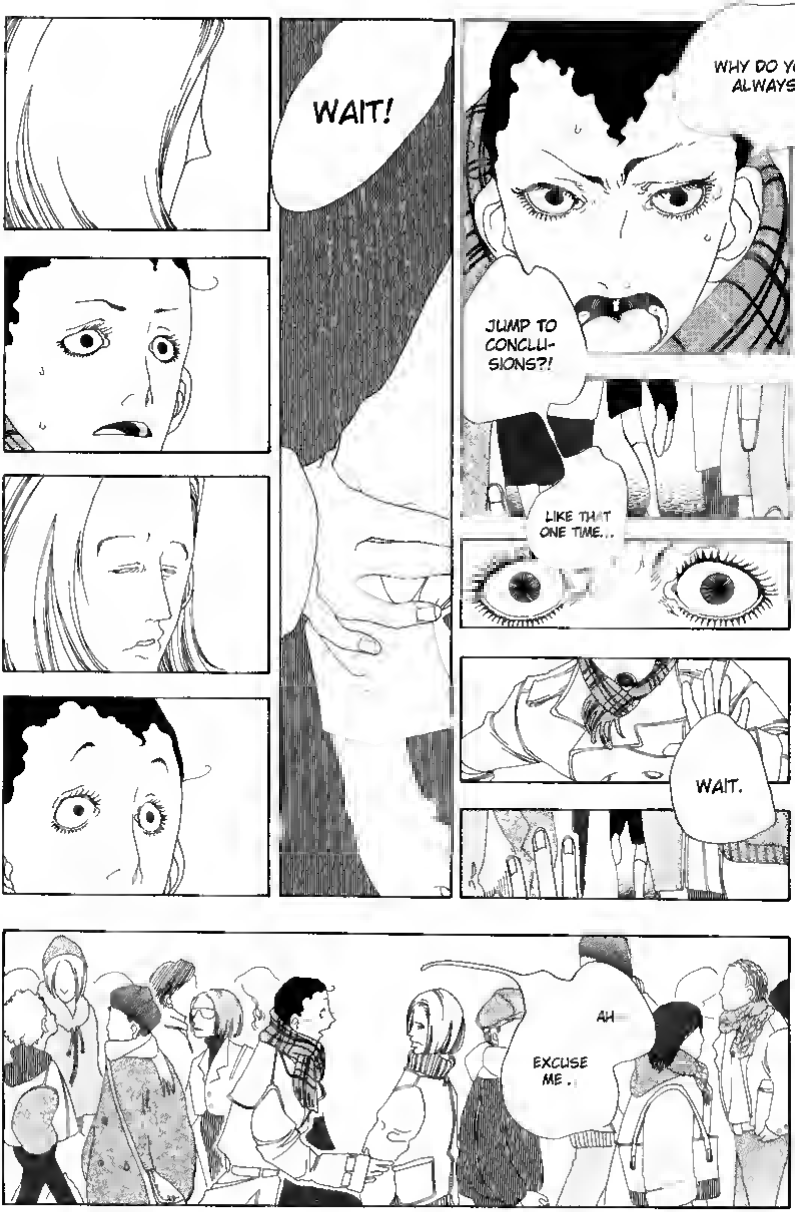

There are no angels here.
WHERE'S MICHEL?
You killed him, didn't you?
He said you don't need wings anymore.
... COPERNICUS ...


"TURNS THE WORM-EATEN TENT INTO A STARLIT SKY".
"THE RHYTHM OF COPERNICUS'S BREATH"
"I FLY"...
COME ON.
SHOW YOURSELF, ALREADY.




YOU DON'T NEED ME ANYMORE, RIGHT?


THAT'S NOT TRUE!


WAIT!
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS
JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS?!
LIKE THAT ONE TIME...
WAIT.
AH—
EXCUSE ME.


AM I STILL SO ATTACHED TO HIM?
I'M CHASING AFTER MY DEAD BROTHER...
EVEN THOUGH I'M THE ONE WHO'S BEEN RUNNING AWAY.
IT BROUGHT ME TO THE POINT OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN AND I'VE DESPERATELY TRIED TO ESCAPE...
AWAY FROM THAT CIRCUS TENT
SHIT.
HOW PATHETIC
I'M A FOOL.
WHAT DO I WANT?
I AM I EVEN IN ANY POSITION TO CHOOSE?
AAAH...
UGH.
I DON'T KNOW...
LEO.
I WANT TO SEE LEO
ring ring ring
ring ring

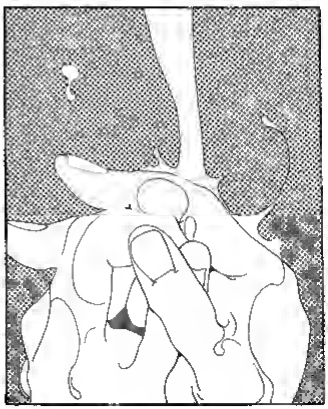

I WAS THINKING IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE'VE GONE OUT FOR DINNER.
Yes
IT'S JUST A CASUAL RESTAU-RANT,
but we haven't had oysters yet this year
DID YOU SAY .. TOMOR-ROW?
HELLO?
LI-UM, TOMORROW IS..
Some-thing wrong?
I PROMISED I'D MEET SO-MEONE.
MICHEL
Whom?

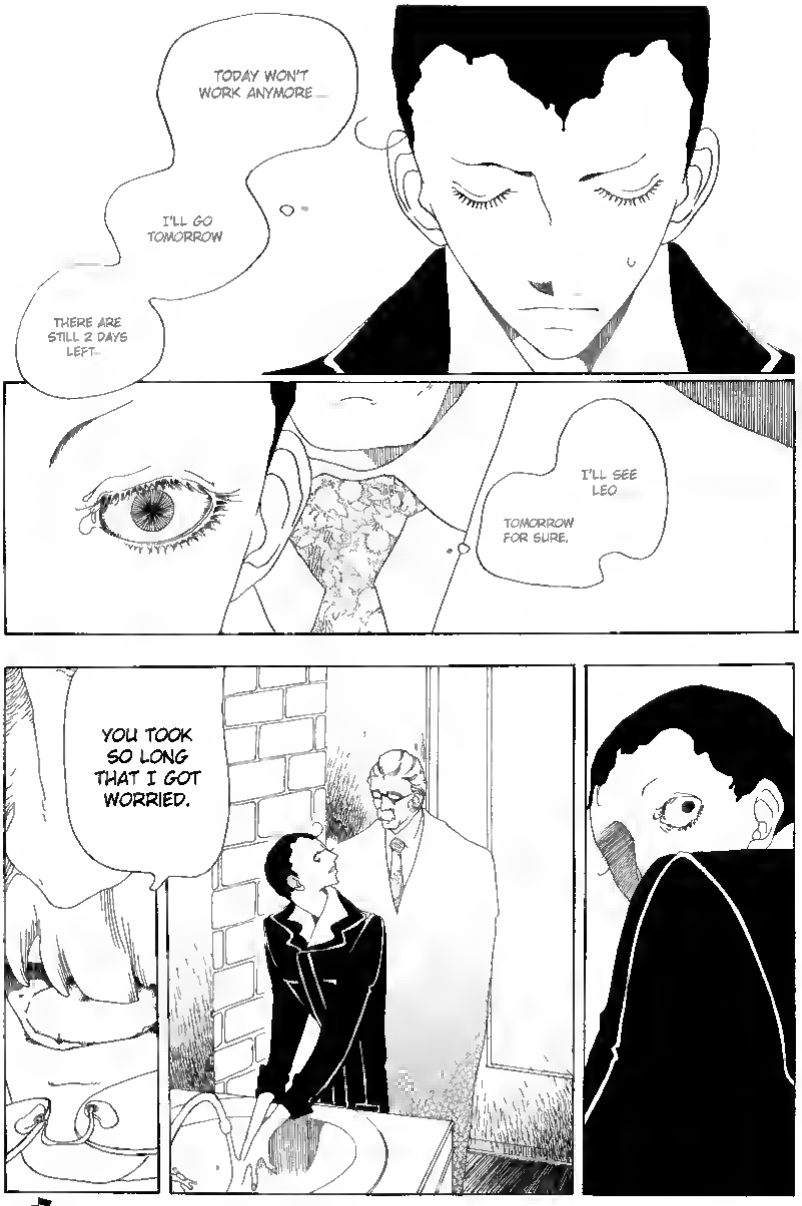


T/N. The Baccalaureat test is the prequalifier for getting into college in France. Most French students take it at the end of high school. Closest US equivalents are the SAT or ACT


IT'S TRUE...
RIGHT?
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE SO SKINNY...
YOU STOP TOO QUICKLY.
THAT'S GOOD YOU REALLY SHOULD GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE
EAT SOME MORE, TAKEO
SCHOOL DAYS, HUH?
BRINGS BACK MEMORIES...
UH...
I NEED TO...


TODAY...




TODAY WON'T WORK ANYMORE...
I'LL GO TOMORROW
THERE ARE STILL 2 DAYS LEFT...
I'LL SEE LEO TOMORROW FOR SURE.
YOU TOOK SO LONG THAT I GOT WORRIED.

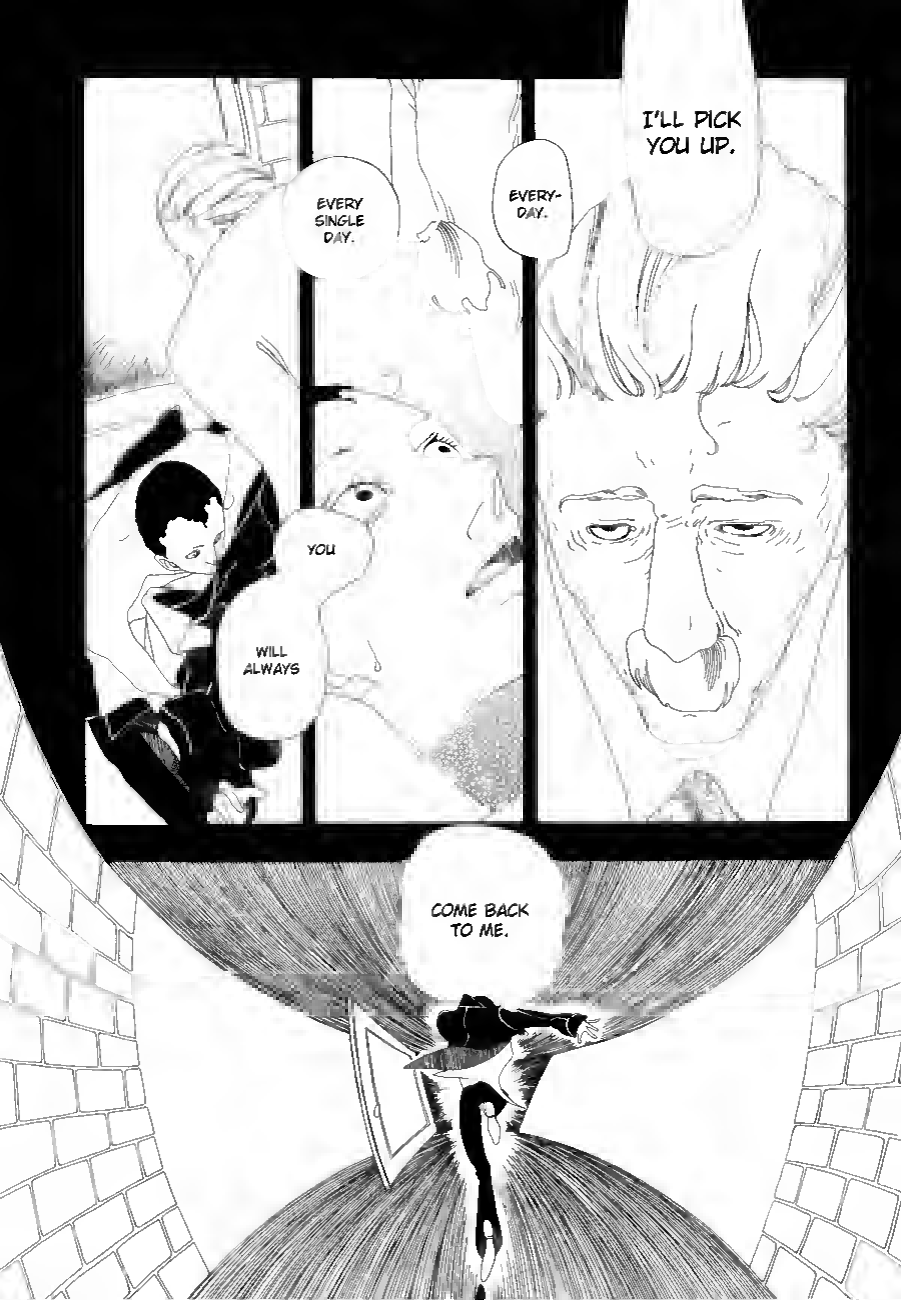

MPH...!
UH...
AH.
SOME-
ONE
MIGHT
NOT HERE...
PLEASE
STOP...


AH!
NO...
PLEASE...
IF SOMEONE WALKS IN...
ARE YOU EMBAR-RASSED?


Y...
YES, I AM...

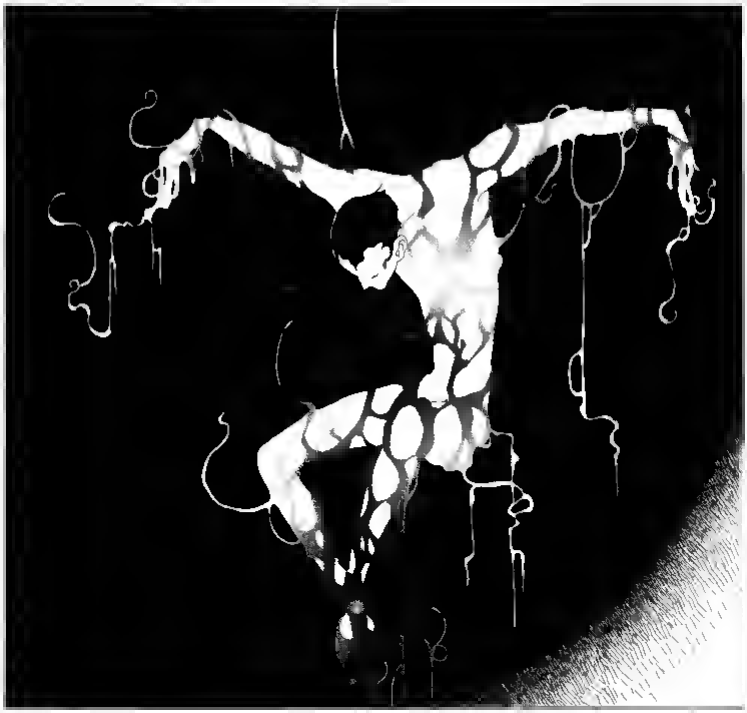

I WONDER
YOUR DIRTY GENITALIA
IS RESPONDING TO MY EVERY TOUCH.
CONTRARY TO WHAT YOU SAY
TWITCHING IN ANTICIPATION.
YOU WANT ME INSIDE YOU.
LOOK.
YOU CAN BARELY CONTAIN YOURSELF.

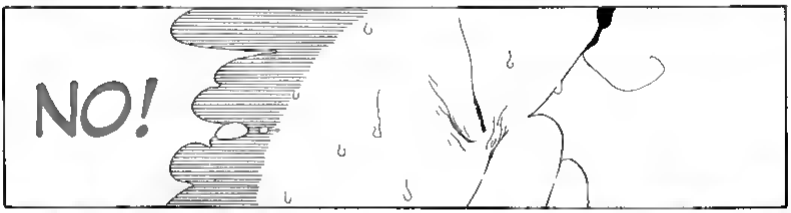

YOU TWO HAVE BECOME FRIENDS...
I'M GLAD
IF WE'RE BOTH AWAY FOR SO LONG...
WILL THINK IT'S STRANGE
M-
MICHEL
WHERE SHALL WE GO TOMORROW?
CHINESE MIGHT BE GOOD...
ITALIAN MIGHT BE NICE, TOO...
BUT THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER
GREAT FOODS TO BE HAD IN FRANCE...
UM...
IT'S GOTTEN COLD LATELY,
PERHAPS A STEW WOULD HIT THE SPOT...
DON'T YOU THINK?
UM
UM!

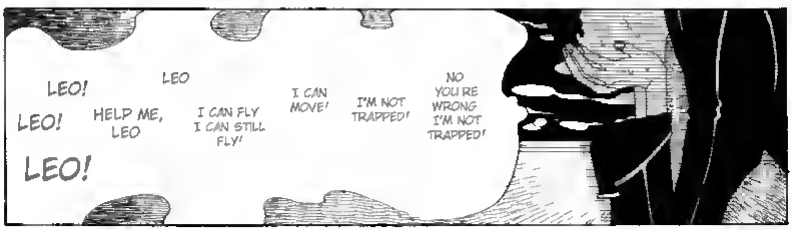

I'LL PICK YOU UP.
EVERY-DAY.
EVERY SINGLE DAY.
YOU
WILL ALWAYS
COME BACK TO ME.


AH!
TAK...!


LEO-
NARDO
ST.
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG




NO!


LEO!
LEO!
HELP ME, LEO
LEO
I CAN FLY I CAN STILL FLY!
I CAN MOVE!
I'M NOT TRAPPED!
NO YOU RE WRONG I'M NOT TRAPPED!
LEO!

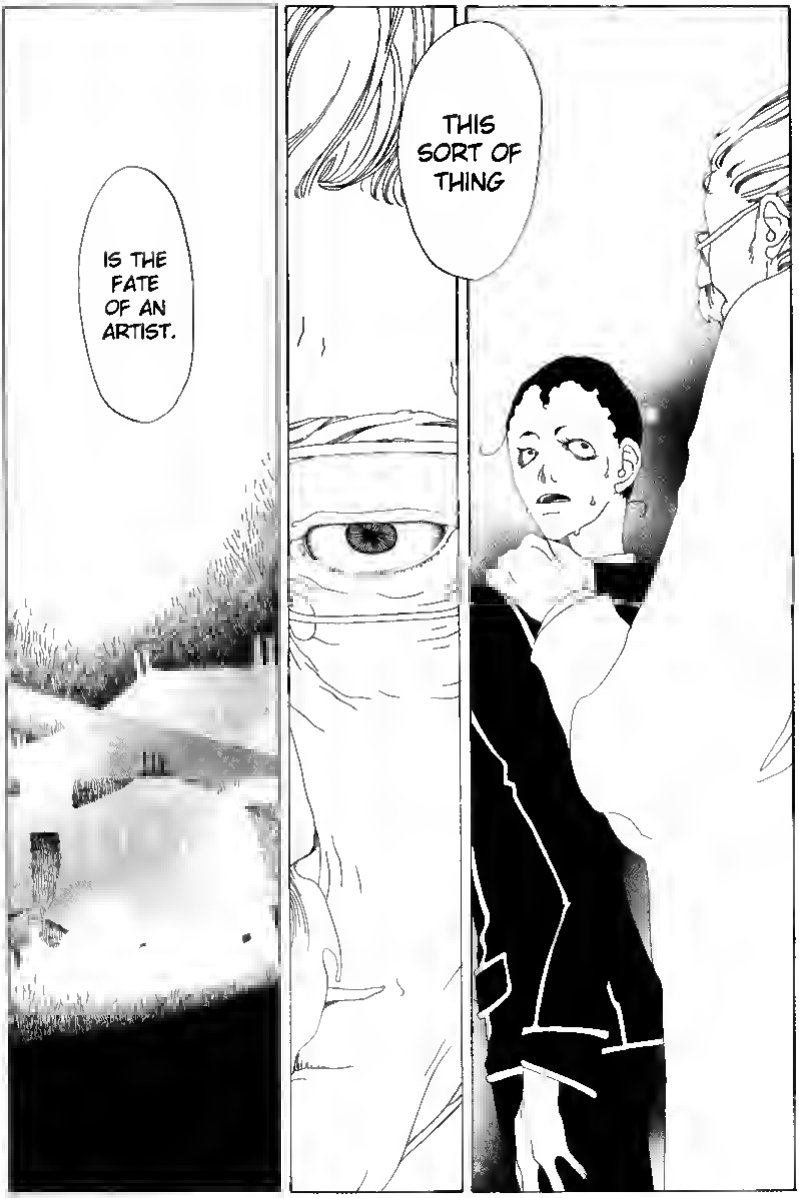

LEO!
POW
POW
POW


BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT.
PMATH-AB
I GUESS
THE JUGGLER MESSED UP
AND 16 PINS

Kosuke Damn! So he had 16 pins in the air all perfectly positioned over his head, or he got hit and kept throwing, or he dodged INTO the pins. Anyway, how the hell does that happen? Even the art is doubtful of this guy's story =P



NO



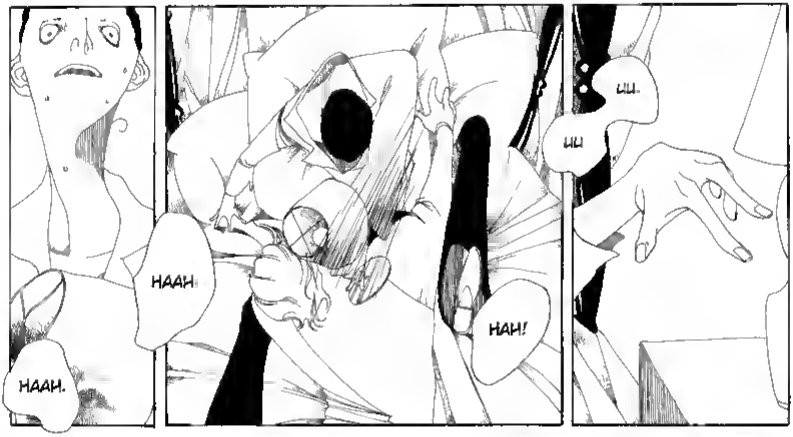
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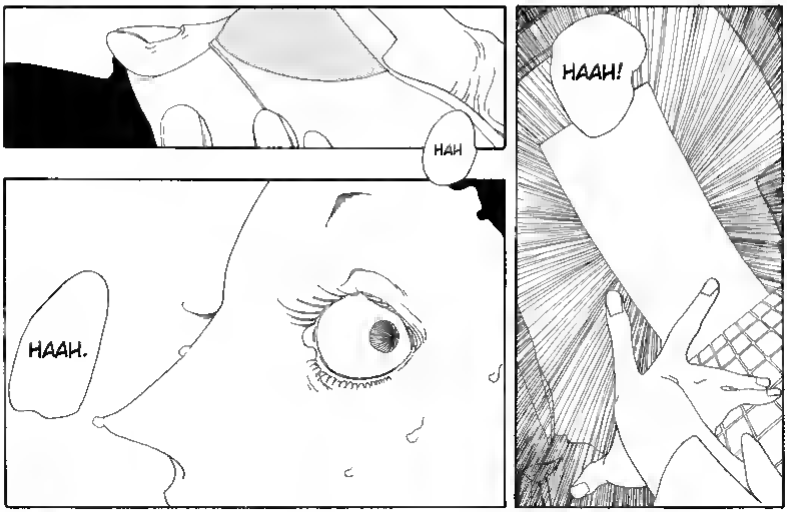
8




MICHEL?
.....
YOU'RE BACK?
...DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
HEY.
LOOK AT ME ...
...NO-THING ...
IT'S NOTHING ...
COCO...




HAAH.
HAAH
HAH!
UH.
UH

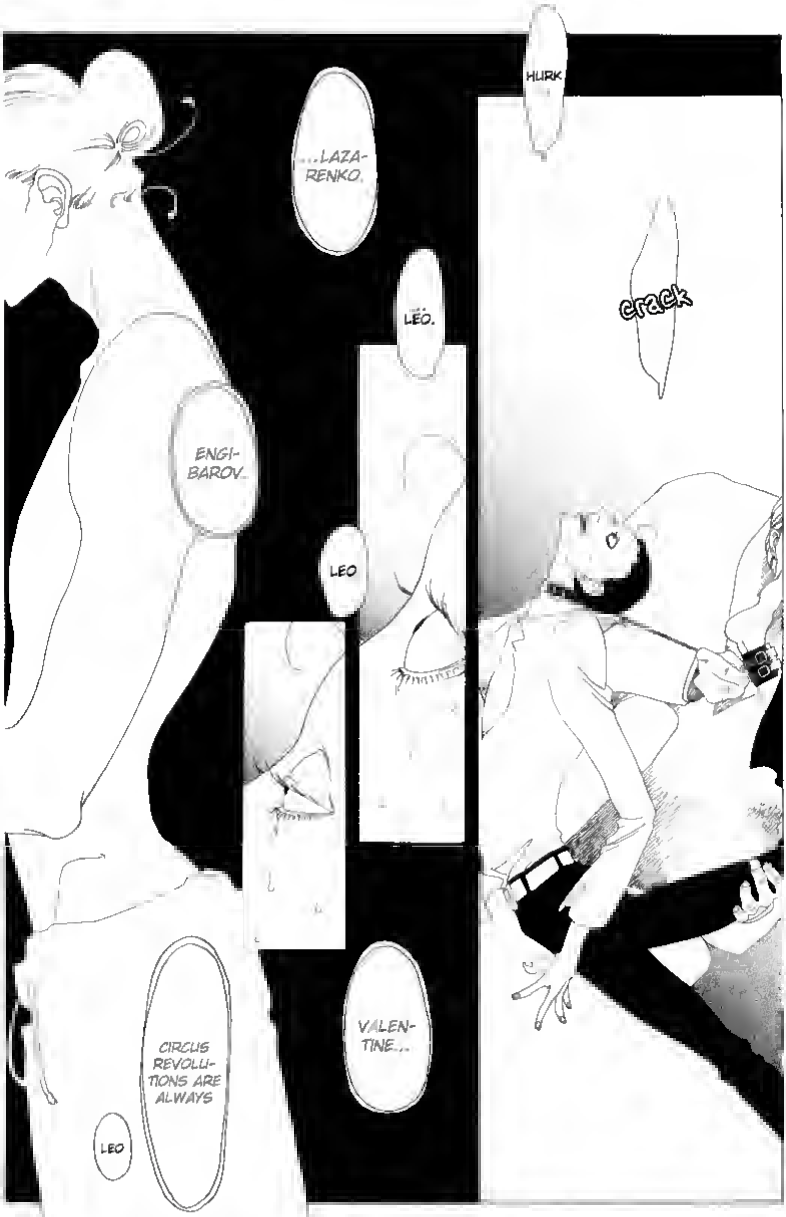

HAAH!
HAH
HAAH.

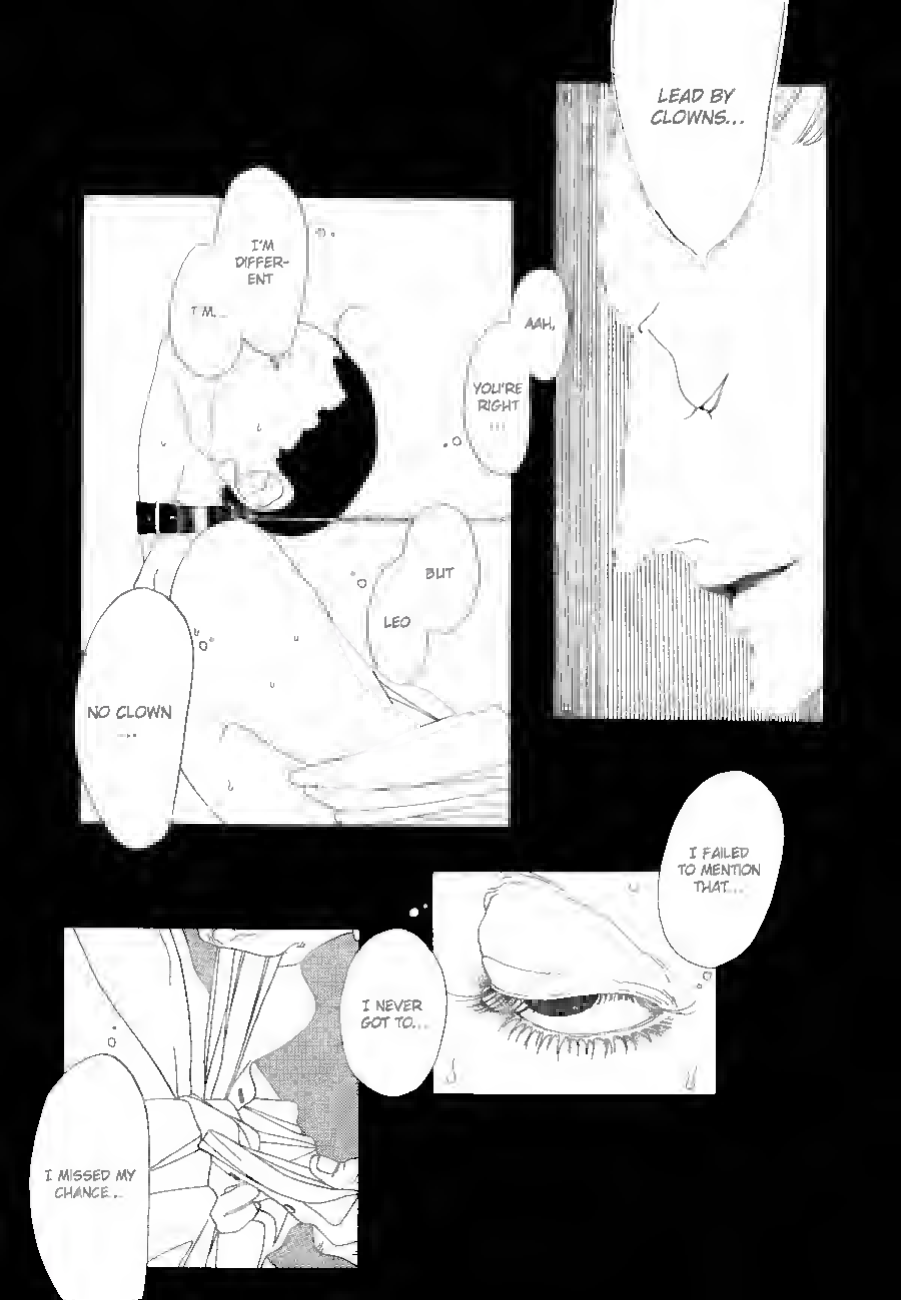

HAAH.
HAAH.
HAAH!
HAH!


HAAH.
HAH!
HAH!
HAAH!


RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE
HAAH.
HAAH!
HAAH!
HAAH.
HAH!
イヤ

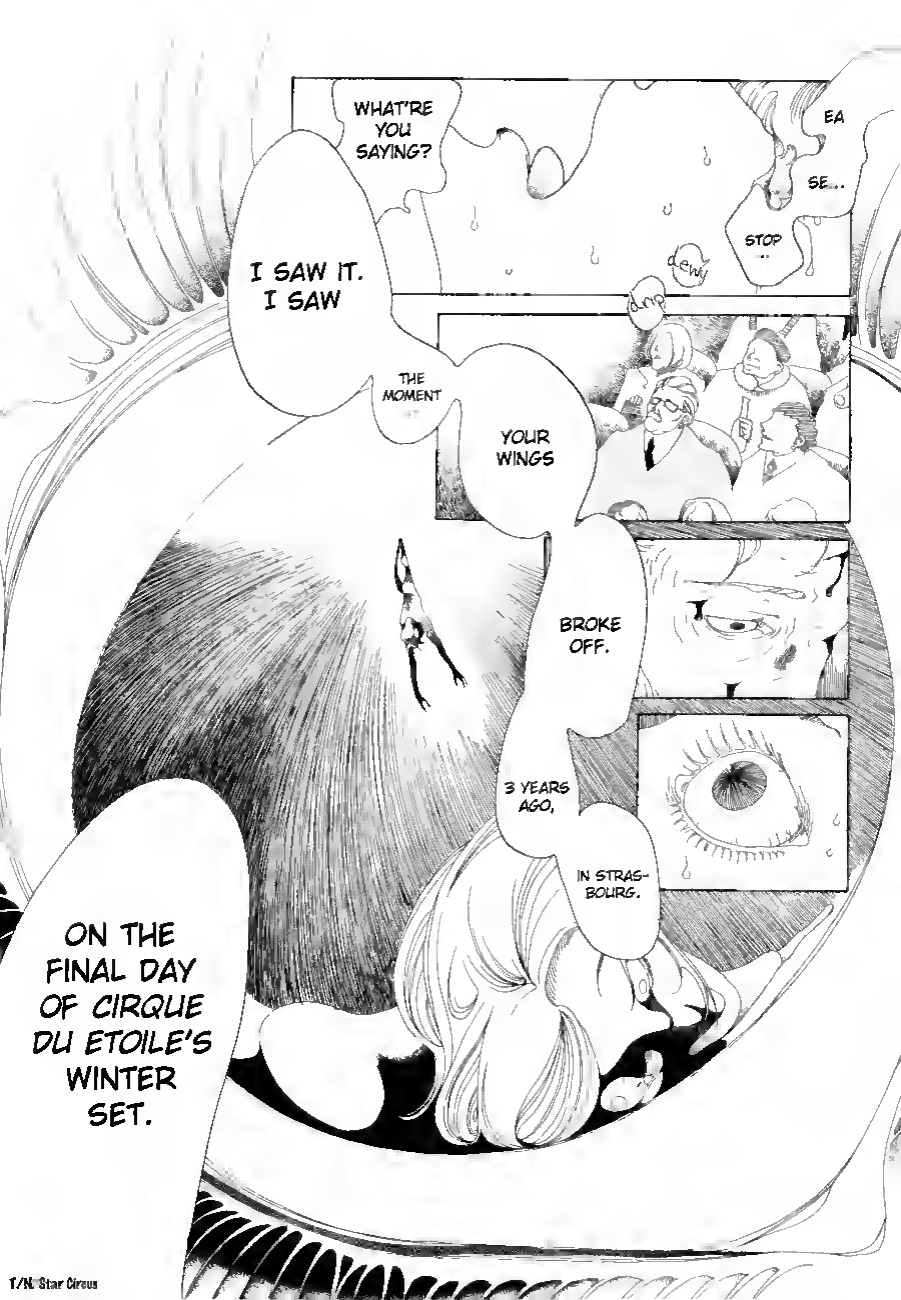

BLECH
URP.
URP!
UH ...
drip
drip
drip
YOU
REALLY
DON'T LISTEN TO A WORD I SAY.
TAKEO.


HURK
...LAZA-RENKO.
LËO.
crack
ENGI-BAROV.
LEO
VALEN-TINE...
CIRCUS REVOLU-TIONS ARE ALWAYS
LEO


LEAD BY CLOWNS...
I'M DIFFER-ENT
I'M...
AAH, YOU'RE RIGHT ...
BUT LEO
NO CLOWN ...
I FAILED TO MENTION THAT...
I NEVER GOT TO...
I MISSED MY CHANCE...


THAT JUGGLER
IS DONE FOR.


I'VE SEEN A SIMILAR ACCIDENT
HAPPEN TO ANOTHER JUGGLER LIKE HIM.
THE FULL HEFT AND MOMENTUM OF A TOTAL OF 13 228KG PINS RAINED A BARRAGE OF BLOWS UPON HIS SKULL.
WHEN HE RETURNED, HE HAD LOST HIS FORMER TALENT.
HE COULD DO 7 AT MOST.
I WONDER HOW IT MUST FEEL
TO HAVE HAD AN ABILITY THAT'LL NEVER RETURN.
TO LOSE THAT PROFICIENCY THROUGH YOUR OWN DOING...
WHAT IF YOU LOST
SOMETHING GREATER?
SAY, THE CLOSEST THING TO YOUR HEART- YOUR OWN PARTNER?
PL



T/N: Star Circus

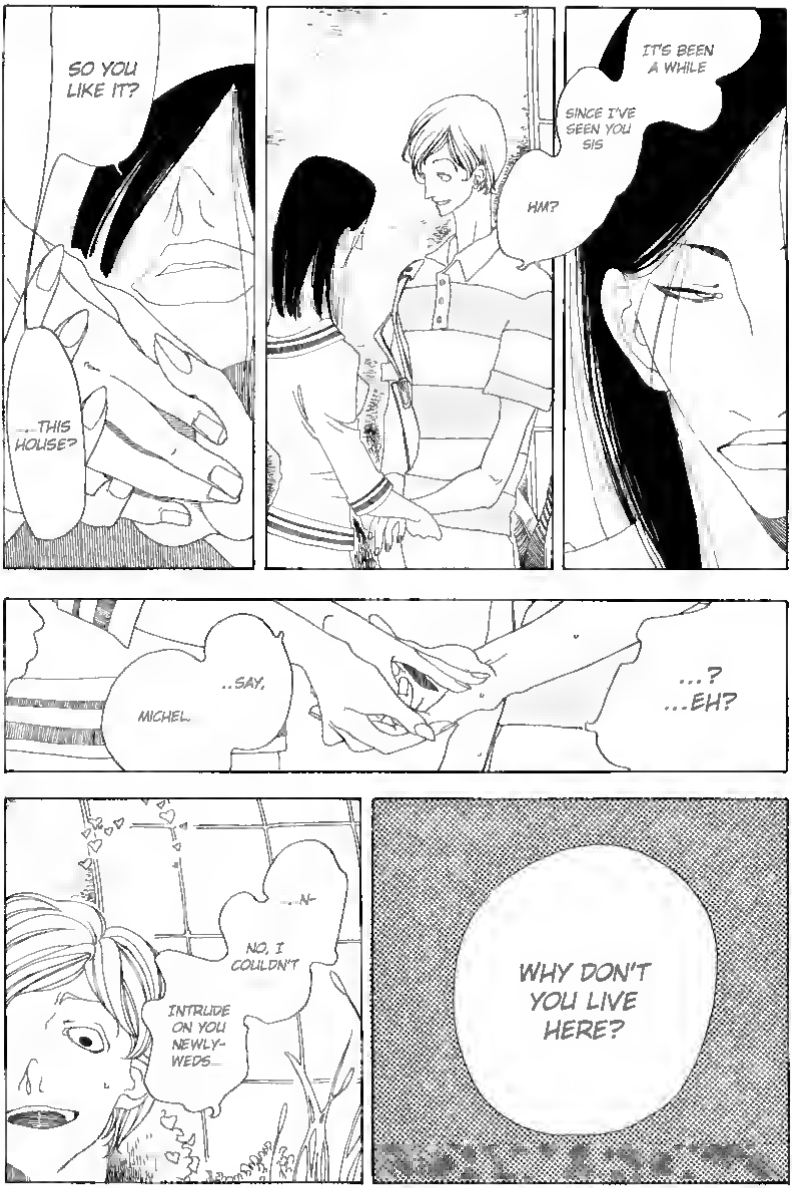

HAAH!
I KNOW,
TAKEO
I KNOW
YOUR
REAL NAME.


HEY...
AM I...
PRETTY?
LIRK
UU...!
HEY, MICHEL...
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
IS IT PRETTY...?
...YES, VERY
YOU LOOK GREAT, SIS
HEARING YOU SAY THAT PUTS MY MIND AT EASE..

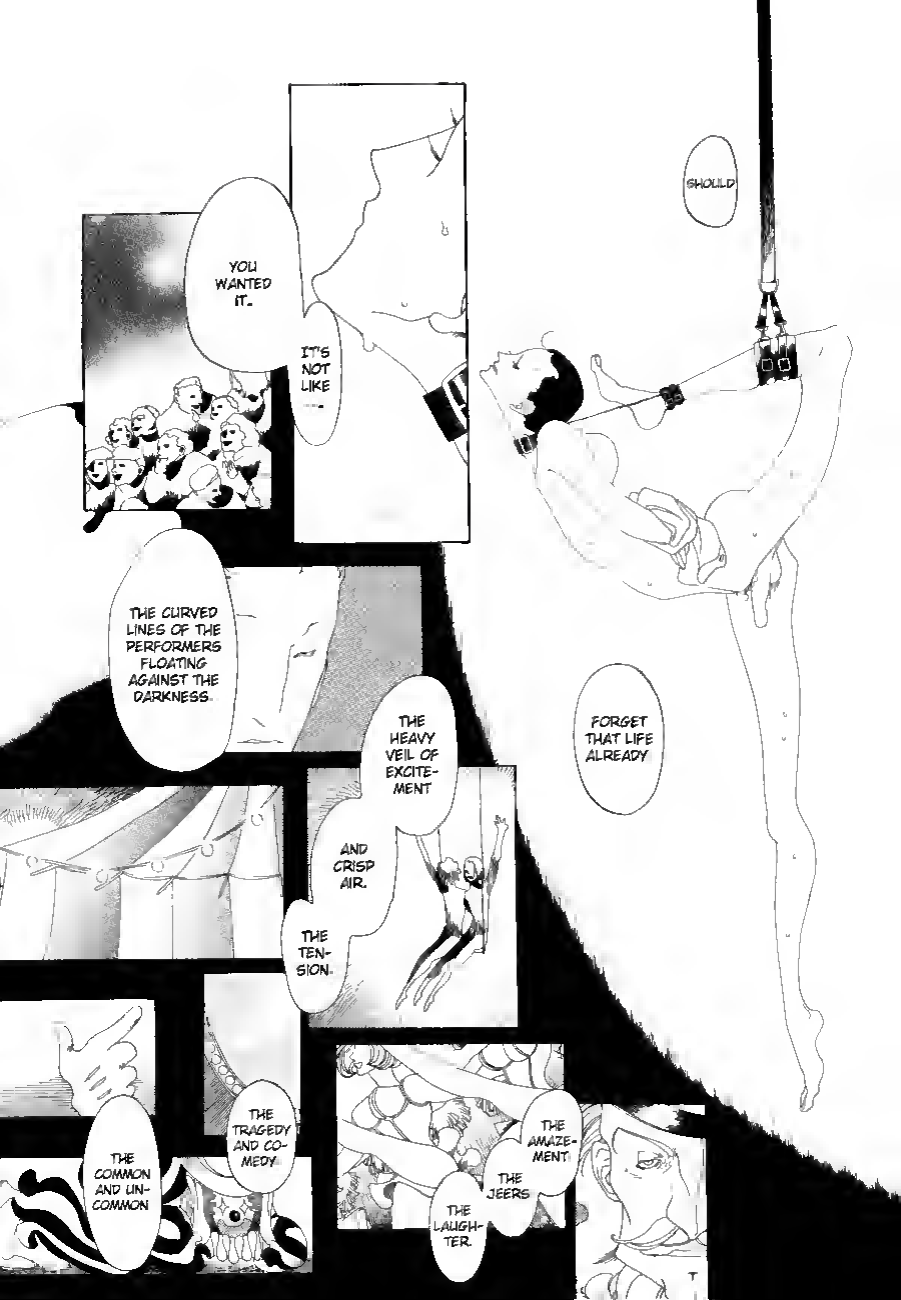

SHE WAS RAPED.
I'M SO SORRY ...
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CANCEL
BUT GIVEN WHAT'S HAPPENED...
RIGHT.
THANKS
THE CEREMONY IS SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WEEKEND ..
SIR...
A MAN BY THE NAME OF OONAGI MAKOTO IS HERE.
THANK YOU FOR COMING OUT


I CAME TODAY...
HUH?
NO, NO THAT'S NOT THE MAIN REASON I'M HERE.
CHECK-ING UP ON HER?
I APPRECIATE YOUR CHECKING UP ON HER, BUT
BUT MY SISTER . DOESN'T WANT TO SEE ANYONE..
TO ASK FOR YOUR SISTER'S
HAND IN MARRIAGE.
I..
OFTEN SAW HIM AT MY FAVORITE CAFE
SOME-TIMES
WE CHAT-TED !!


HE SAID HE'S A JAPANESE DIPLOMAT,
AND THAT FRENCH COFFEE IS TOO BITTER FOR HIM.
HE WAS ALWAYS DRINKING TEA
I THOUGHT HE WAS KINDA CUTE...
I..
snap
THIS HOUSE IS GORGEOUS!
CAUGHT ME BY SURPRISE!
snap
SORRY I COULDN'T COME EARLIER
LIVING ALONE IS JUST AS HECTIC AS I HAD IMAGINED
snap


SO YOU LIKE IT?
...THIS HOUSE?
HM?
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE SEEN YOU SIS
...SAY, MICHEL
...? ...EH?
...N- NO, I COULDN'T INTRUDE ON YOU NEWLY-WEDS...
WHY DON'T YOU LIVE HERE?

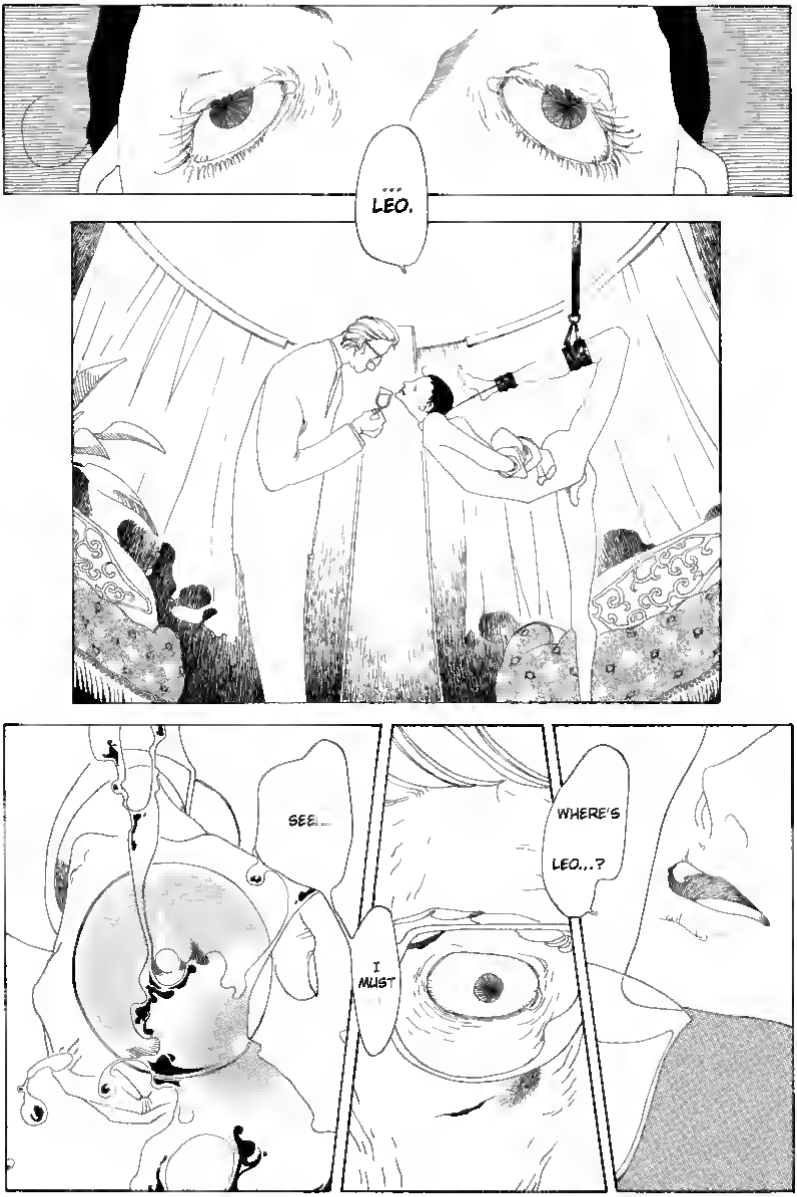

creak
creak
creak
YOU...
VERY PRETTY...
YOU'RE PRETTY.
DON'T CRY, COCO.
IT'S ALRIGHT.
STAY WITH ME...
PLEASE...


SHOULD
FORGET THAT LIFE ALREADY
YOU WANTED IT.
IT'S NOT LIKE ---
THE CURVED LINES OF THE PERFORMERS FLOATING AGAINST THE DARKNESS.
THE HEAVY VEIL OF EXCITE-MENT
AND CRISP AIR.
THE TEN-SION.
THE COMMON AND UN-COMMON
THE TRAGEDY AND CO-MEDY.
THE LAUGH-TER.
THE JEERS
THE AMAZE-MENT.


YOU WEREN'T THERE.
YOU DANCED FREELY IN THE TENT'S STARLIT SKY, HIGH ABOVE THE BEWITCHING CIRCUS RINGS.
IT WAS A WORLD ONLY FOR THOSE CHOSEN.
YOU FLED THAT WORLD, AS YOU SO WISHED TO DO.
IN THAT MOMENT,
THE MOMENT OF THE ACCIDENT,
IT ALL BECAME A DREAM.


OH, MY.
YOU COULDN'T HOLD IT IN, I SEE.
POOR THING.


HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
ARE YOU BEGINNING TO UNDER-STAND YOUR SITUATION?
SAY IT, TAKEO.
YOU NEED ME, DON'T YOU?

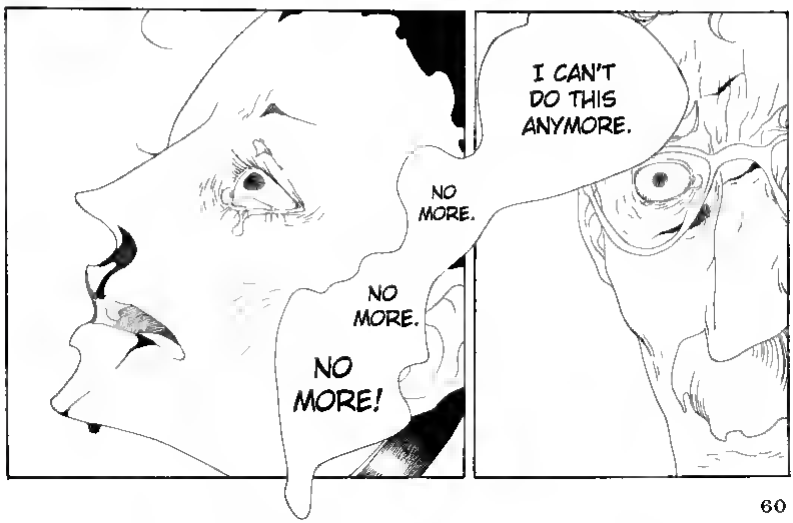

...
LEO.
SEE...
I MUST
WHERE'S LEO...?

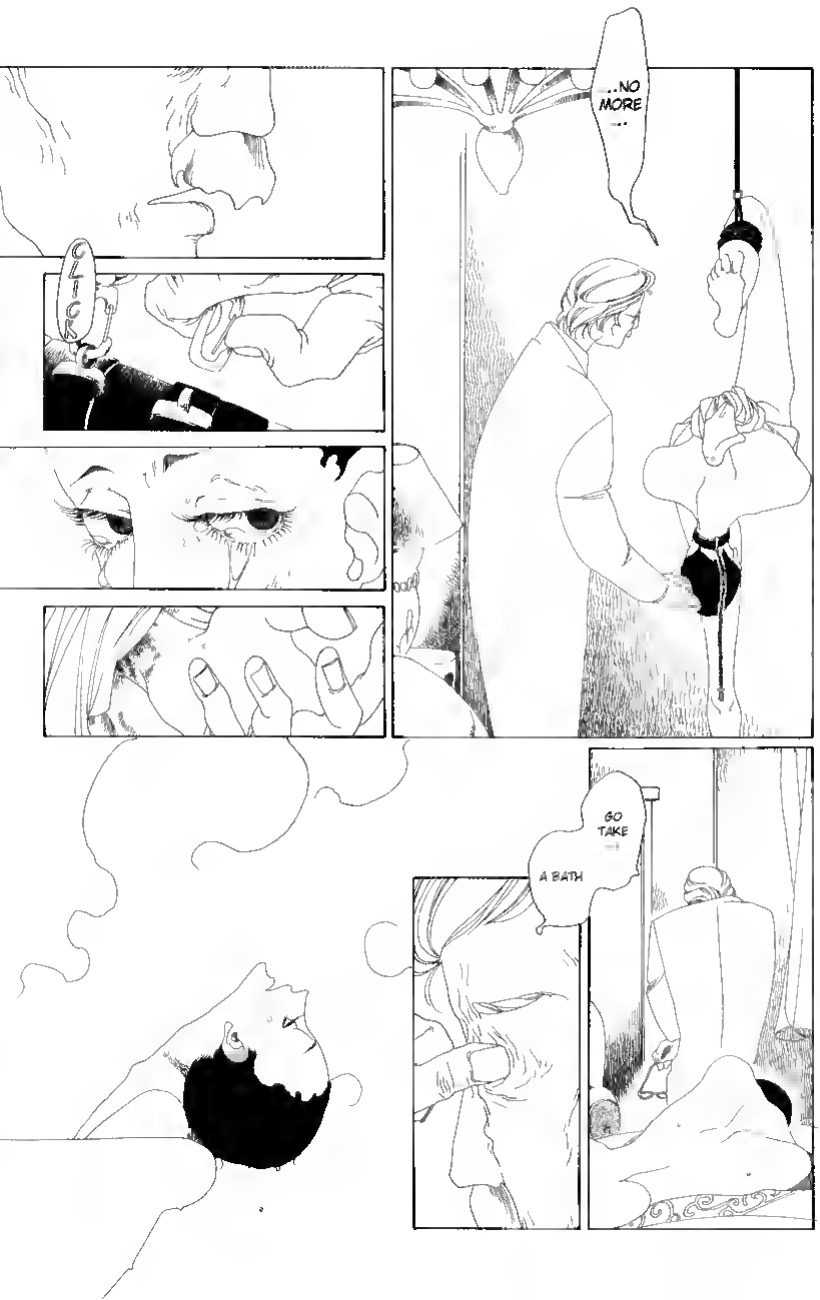

YOU'RE LYING!
LÉO
HE'S DEAD!
THAT JUGGLER DIED!


YOU HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST LOVE FOR ME.
ALL YOU EVER DO IS LIE.
IT'S MY WOUNDS
THAT YOU LOVE.
NOT ME
YOU STILL DON'T UNDER-STAND?
STUPID BOY.
I DON'T
LOVE YOU, EITHER.
NOT ONE BIT.
SAME AS COCO
YOU MERELY


TOOK AD-
VANTAGE
OF US.


DON'T TOUCH ME.
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
I...
WHAT HAVE I...
YOU POOR THING!
YOU POOR THING.
AAAH!
AH!
AAAH!
AH!


I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE.
NO MORE.
NO MORE.
NO MORE!


..NO MORE ...
CLICK
GO TAKE A BATH


HERE
I'M RE-TURNING THIS
I BOUGHT IT... FOR YOU, ANYWAY...
IT'S GOING TO GET COLDER FROM HERE ON OUT
THE COAT WITH YOU.
TAKE...


YOUR NAME IS EMBROIDERED ON IT.
TAKEO
HNAGI
JUST FOR A WHILE
ER.
IF YOU'RE CALLED BY THAT NAME,
WILL YOU TURN AND LOOK...?
TAKEO.



[End of Chapter 8]

T/N Apparently this means a 180 degree turn. We can assume that up until the previous testimony his client looked very guilty.




WOW! NOBODY CAN STAND IN YOUR WAY, MICHEL!
EVEN THAT HARD-ASS, PROFESSOR CHAGNON, SPOKE HIGHLY OF YOU!
HE DID NOT.
HE SAID YOU HAVE TALENT AND A STRONG AMBITION, AND SPARE NO EFFORT IN DRAWING THOSE QUALITIES OUT.
AND THAT THAT'S THE REASON FOR YOUR SUCCESS!


THANK YOU


HMM ...
BY THE WAY, I'M UP FOR DEFENSE NEXT WEEK
SO COULD YOU HELP ME WITH MY ABSTRACT?
I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOME CAKE AT LES DEUX MAGOTS!
TOO CROWDED...
BUT I'M A REGULAR! SORRY, I'LL GO ON AHEAD MEET YOU THERE!
BYE!


WELL, AREN'T YOU JUST MR. NICE GUY!


I'D BE EVEN MORE TROUBLE TO REFUSE.
I... DON'T MIND ... I'LL GO.
DON'T ASSOCIATE WITH A RUBE LIKE HIM.

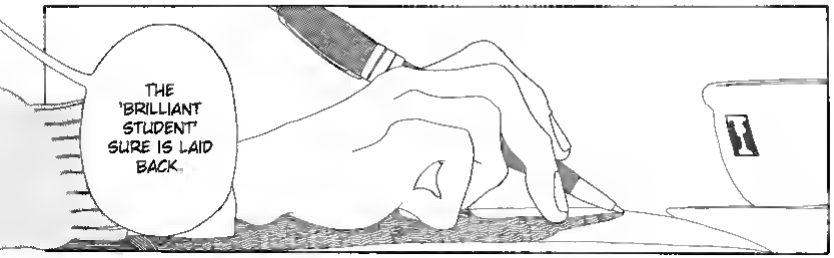

AND HE'S A REGULAR AT LES DEUX MAGOTS?
...AWFULLY BRAZEN FOR SOMEONE WHO JUST MET YOU...

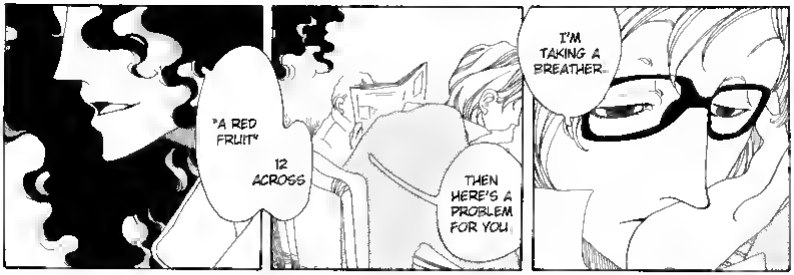


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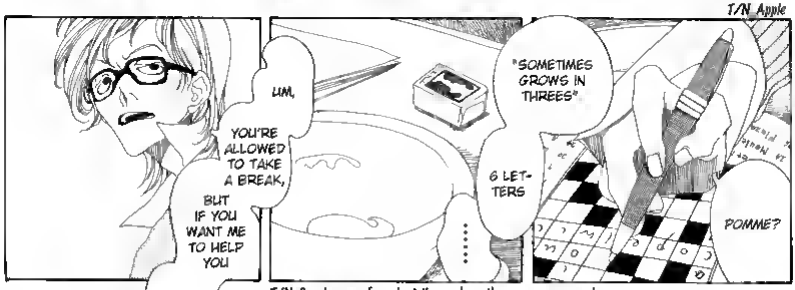


Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po): One of the distinguished Grandes Écoles (GE) schools that educate the governmental and financial elite. Requires a special two-year course to pass the demanding entrance examination. Graduates receive a starting salary markedly higher than that of most common college graduates, and are guaranteed a high social status in life.

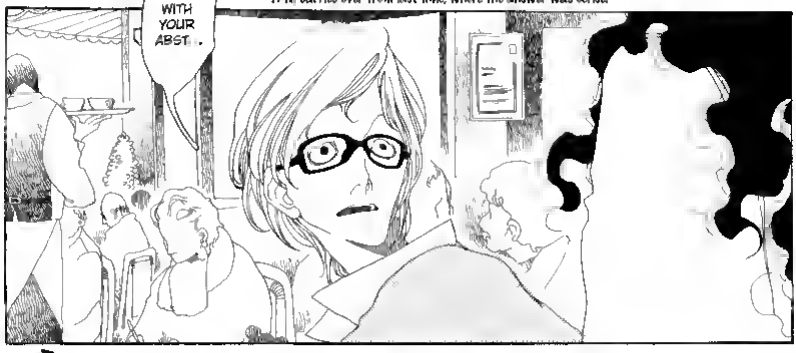




T/N: Apple



T/N: Carries over from last time, where the answer was cerise.




TAKEO
HAS IT BEEN THREE YEARS?


IT WAS MEAN OF YOU TO UP AND DISAPPEAR LIKE YOU DID
WHAT'RE YOU DOING NOW, MICHEL?
I GOT INTO UNI-VERSITY... SOME-HOW...
DO YOU LIKE IT?
SURE, IT'S AL-RIGHT...
I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN BANISHED TO REPORT-WRITING HELL, THOUGH
MY EYESIGHT'S BEEN UTTERLY DESTROYED, AND THE SAD RESULT LIES BEFORE YOU
WHAT ABOUT YOU, TAKEO?
AFTER I LEFT, I ROAMED THE PARIS SUBURBS...
NOW I'M WORKING AT A NEARBY CHINESE RESTAU-RANT.
DO YOU LIKE IT?
I GUESS?
AT LEAST I'LL NEVER STARVE...
HOW'S COCO DOING...?


...SHE'S SEEING A DOCTOR.
SHE'S STABILIZED SOME AS OF LATE
SHE GROWS FLOWERS TO KEEP BUSY...
I SEE...
...HEY.
HAVE YOU.. GIVEN UP CIRCUS PERFOR-MANCE?
...YEAH
.....
...LOOK AT YOU.

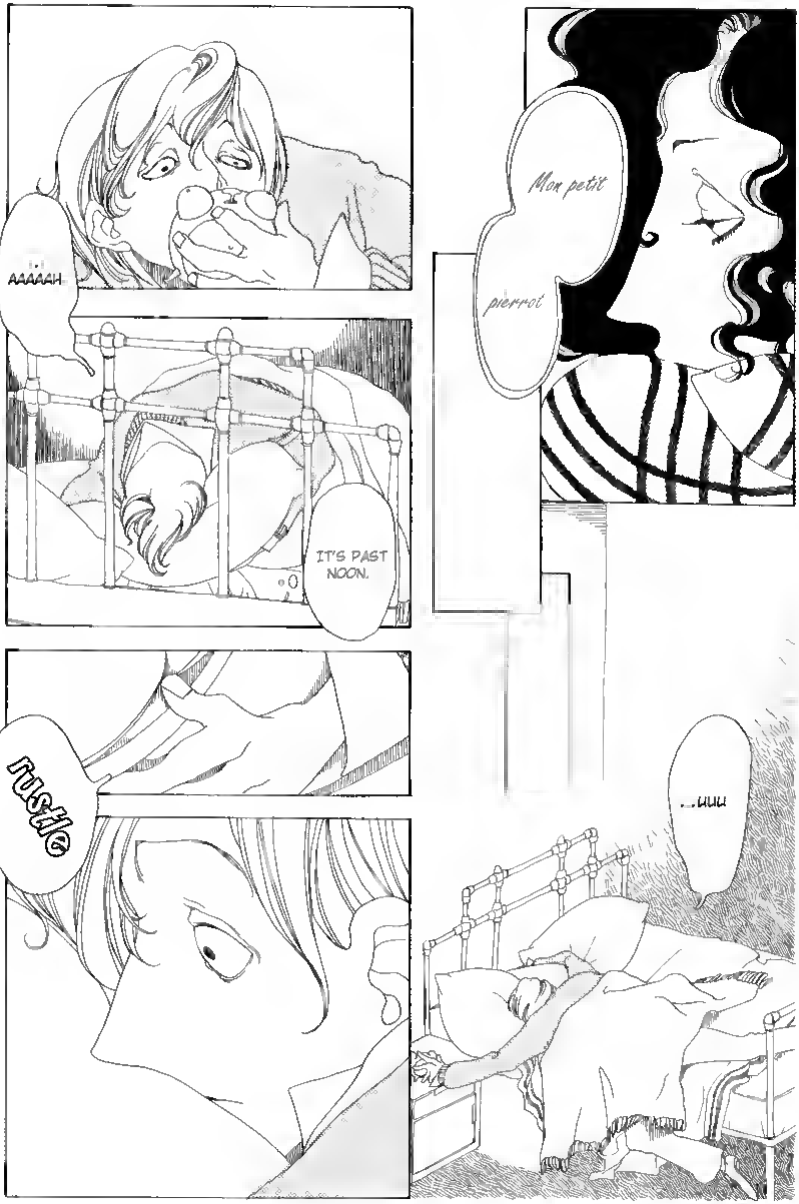

AH...
INTO A SCRA-TCHY
5 O'CLOCK SHADOW
KIND OF MAN...
...YOU'VE REALLY GROWN UP, HUH...?
ring ring ring ring
ring ring ring ring
ring ring ring ring


ring ring ring ring ring
YES?
clatter
ring ring ring
YEAH...
ALRIGHT
THERE S ENOUGH
I SEE
BYE...
click
WHAT WAS THAT?
WHAT A STRANGE CALL
WHAT WAS THAT...?

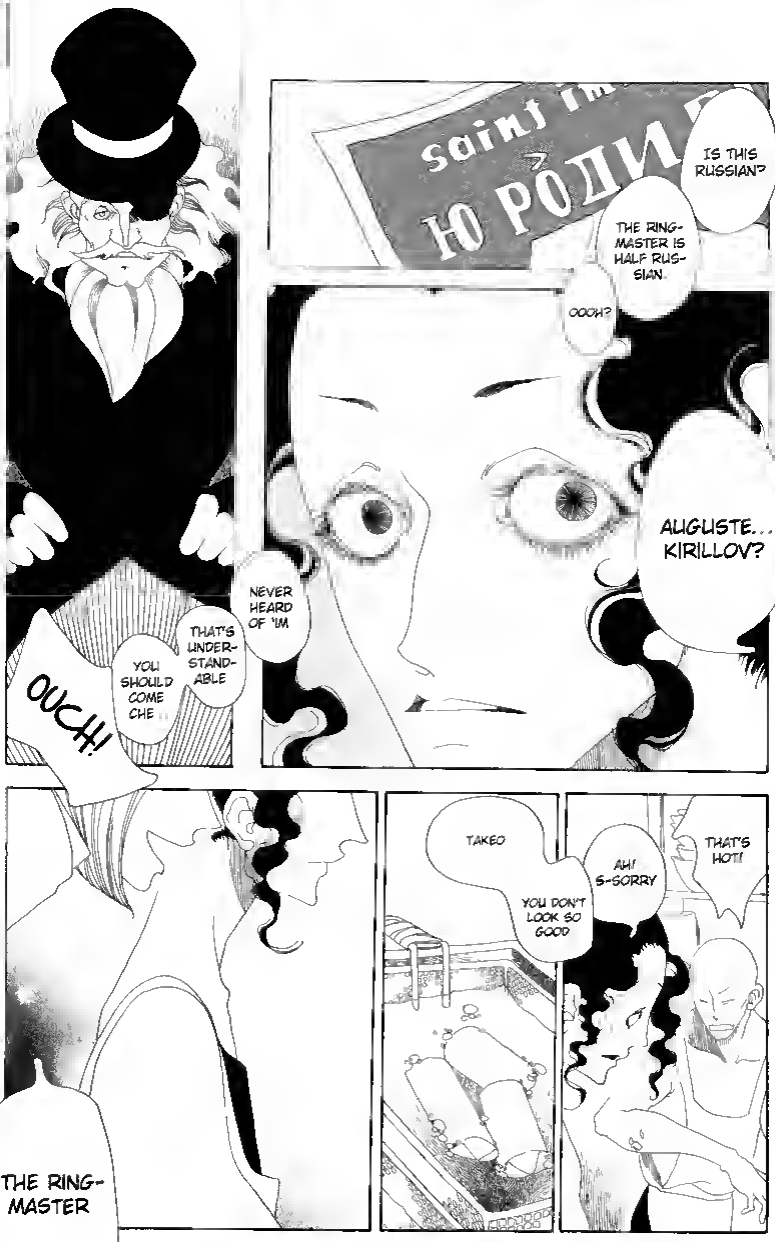



THREE YEARS,
HUH ?
I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE.
TO BE ABLE TO JUGGLE 16 PINS ..
HAHA
SORRY I DON'T MEAN TO BE SO MELANCHOLY
THANKS FOR COMING

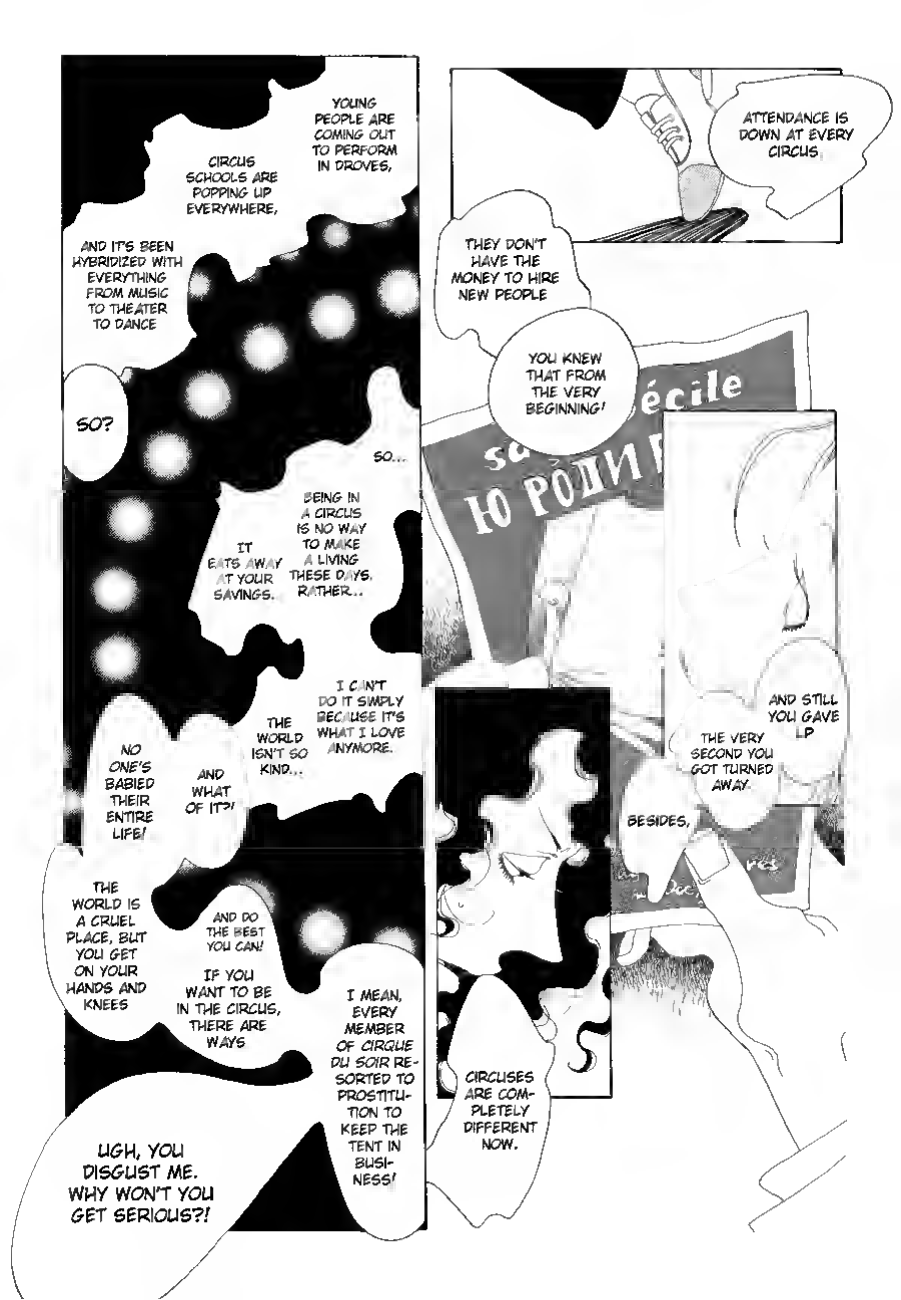

...WE TRIED TO STOP HIM, BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN
HE FORCED US TO RELEASE HIM...
...HEY, BIRD'S NEST...
KEEP WORKING IN THE CIRCUS
...
EVEN THOUGH HE W..S STILL PRESCRIBED BED REST
...
Au revoir
Mon petit pièrrot.
Au revoir...

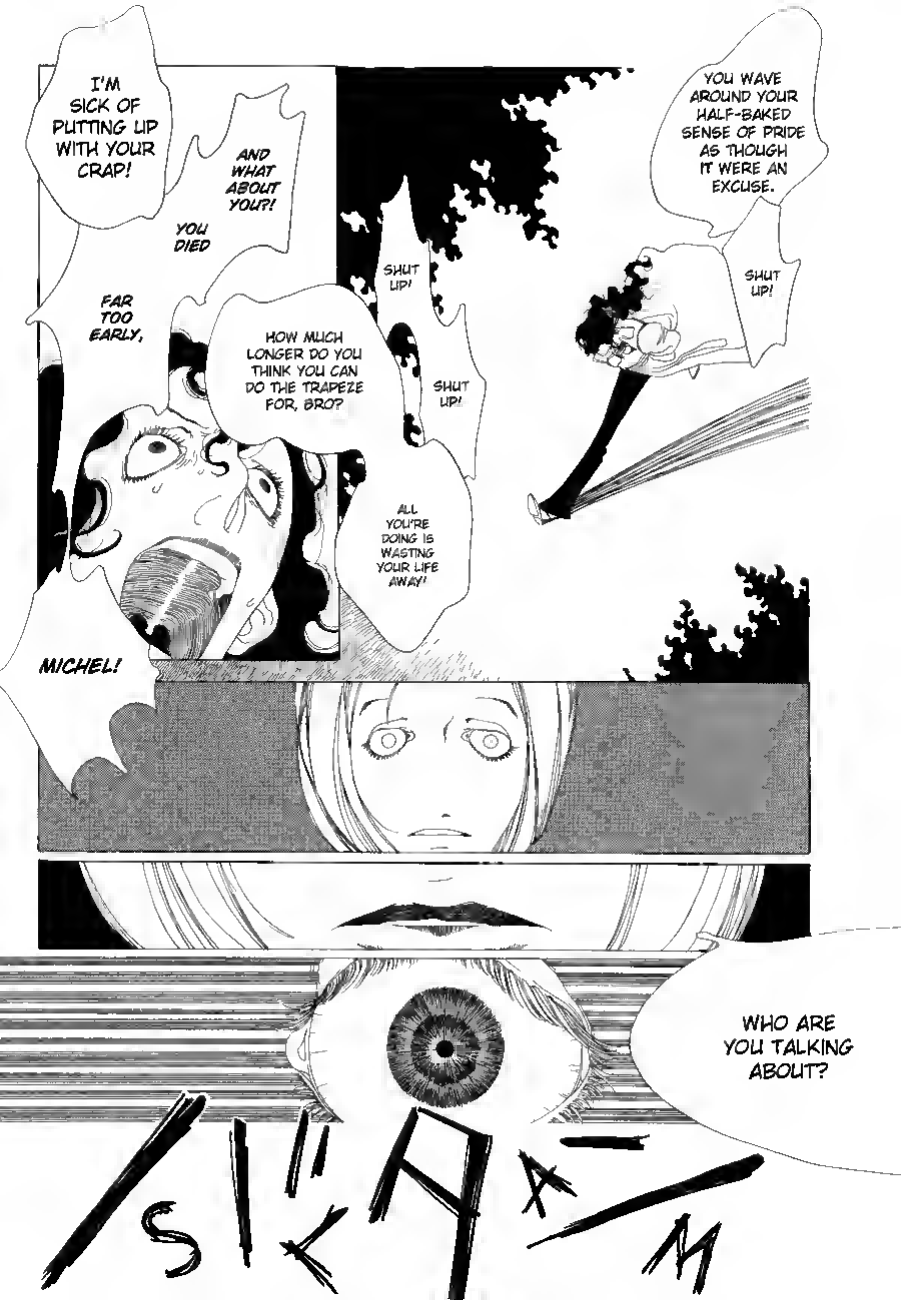

AAAAAH
IT'S PAST NOON.
Mon petit
pierrot
...HUH
rustle


UMM, THIS IS GONNA BE TO-GO...
I'LL TAKE FIVE ORDERS OF SZECHUAN CHILI SHRIMP AND RICE...
AND TEN SPRING ROLLS...
FIVE ORDERS OF LETTUCE-WRAPPED FRIED RICE
IT'LL TAKE SOME TIME IS THAT ALRIGHT?
THE C LUNCH IS UP...
TIANJIN RAMEN AND A HALF-ORDER OF FRIED RICE
CANTONESE RICE IS READY, TOO
YOU'RE GONNA CARRY THAT ALL BY YOURSELF?
THAT'S QUITE THE HAUL!
ARE YOU IN CONSTRUCTION OR SOMETHIN'?
AH
I'M IN THE CIRCUS.
HERE'S A FLYER.
HOT OFF THE PRESSES!
IT'S NOT IN THE CITY
HUH
Saint Imbecilles


IS THIS RUSSIAN?
THE RING-MASTER IS HALF RUS-SIAN.
OOOH?
AUGUSTE... KIRILLOV?
NEVER HEARD OF 'IM
THAT'S UNDER-STAND-ABLE
YOU SHOULD COME CHE...
OUCH!
"THE RING-MASTER
TAKEO
YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD
AH! S-SORRY
THAT'S HOT!

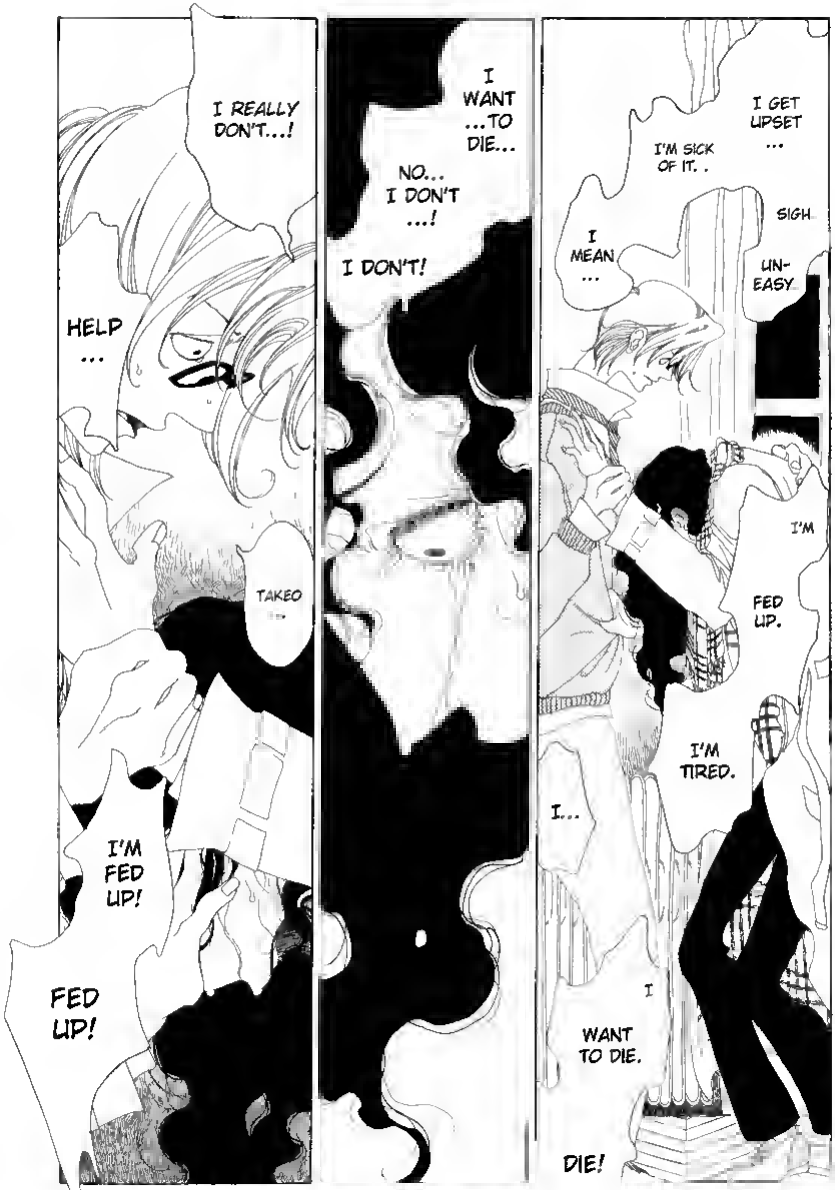

I'M FED UP!"
KIDDING!
YOU'RE A REGULAR WORKING BOY NOW.
BRO.
CONTINUES TO WORK IN A CIRCUS.
SO WHY AM I STUCK HERE,
COVERED IN OIL,
DAY AFTER DAY?
YOU WERE SO COOL
UP UNTIL THREE YEARS AGO
WHEN YOU RAN OUT ON THE CIRCUS
I TOLD YOU!
I DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE!


ATTENDANCE IS DOWN AT EVERY CIRCUS.
THEY DON'T HAVE THE MONEY TO HIRE NEW PEOPLE
YOU KNEW THAT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING!
AND STILL YOU GAVE UP
THE VERY SECOND YOU GOT TURNED AWAY.
BESIDES,
CIRCUSES ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT NOW.
I MEAN, EVERY MEMBER OF CIRQUE DU SOIR RESORTED TO PROSTITUTION TO KEEP THE TENT IN BUSINESS!
UGH, YOU DISGUST ME. WHY WON'T YOU GET SERIOUS?!
THE WORLD IS A CRUEL PLACE, BUT YOU GET ON YOUR HANDS AND KNEES
AND DO THE BEST YOU CAN!
IF YOU WANT TO BE IN THE CIRCUS, THERE ARE WAYS
NO ONE'S BABIED THEIR ENTIRE LIFE!
AND WHAT OF IT?!
THE WORLD ISN'T SO KIND...
I CAN'T DO IT SIMPLY BECAUSE IT'S WHAT I LOVE ANYMORE.
IT EATS AWAY AT YOUR SAVINGS.
BEING IN A CIRCUS IS NO WAY TO MAKE A LIVING THESE DAYS, RATHER...
SO...
SO?
AND IT'S BEEN HYBRIDIZED WITH EVERYTHING FROM MUSIC TO THEATER TO DANCE
CIRCUS SCHOOLS ARE POPPING UP EVERYWHERE,
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE COMING OUT TO PERFORM IN DROVES,


I'M SICK OF PUTTING UP WITH YOUR CRAP!
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU?!
YOU DIED
FAR TOO EARLY,
MICHEL!
HOW MUCH LONGER DO YOU THINK YOU CAN DO THE TRAPEZE FOR, BRO?
SHUT UP!
ALL YOU'RE DOING IS WASTING YOUR LIFE AWAY!
SHUT UP!
YOU WAVE AROUND YOUR HALF-BAKED SENSE OF PRIDE AS THOUGH IT WERE AN EXCUSE.
SHUT UP!
WHO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
SIKAM


HA!
HA!
HAAH
HAAH.
?
HAAH
HA!
HAAH!
flap
HA!
HAAH.
flap
flap
HAAH!
ARE THESE
HAAH!


Gl...
WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?
AH...
N-
NO.
I DON'T DO THEM ALL THE TIME.
NOT EVERY-DAY...
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.


I REALLY DON'T...!
HELP ...
TAKEO ...
I'M FED UP!
FED UP!
I WANT ...TO DIE...
NO... I DON'T ...!
I DON'T!
I GET UPSET ...
I'M SICK OF IT. .
SIGH
I MEAN ...
UN-EASY
I'M FED UP.
I'M TIRED.
I...
I WANT TO DIE.
DIE!


AH!
WAI
UP...
FED
CHIPS
STO...
HAAH!
AH.
HA


YOU CAN'T BLAME ME FOR DOING THIS.






NO!
I'M FINE.
SORR
AH!
IT'S OK.
DEEPER.
MAKE IT HURT!
I WANT IT TO HURT!
GOOD.
SO GO...
OOOW!


MICHEL
...
barf
HA!
HA!
HAAH
AH
UH
YOU SHOULD GO AHEAD AND WASH UP
YOU'RE FILTHY
ALRIGHT
IN THAT CASE...


I...
HAVEN'T CHANGED
ONE BIT
I...
TOOK ADVANTAGE OF YOUR KINDNESS AGAIN
I'M REALLY
NO, NO . DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
IT FEELS LIKE I'M THE ONE WHO TAKES ADVANTAGE OF YOU
I'M NOT
ALL THAT KIND
RATHER
SORRY...


I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.


I'M STAYING BY YOUR SIDE.
UNTIL YOU CAN MAKE IT ON YOUR OWN WITHOUT RELYING ON STRANGE SUBSTANCES.
BUT... DON'T YOU HAVE SCHOOL?
I'LL BE FINE I BROUGHT ALL MY TEXTBOOKS.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN
I'LL PAY HALF THE RENT.
BUT YOU'RE A STUDENT AT SCIENCES PO, RIGHT?
AREN'T YOU EXTREMELY BUSY?
BESIDES...
I SAID I'LL BE FINE.
I'M DOING THIS BECAUSE I WANT TO
I...



[End of Chapter 9]

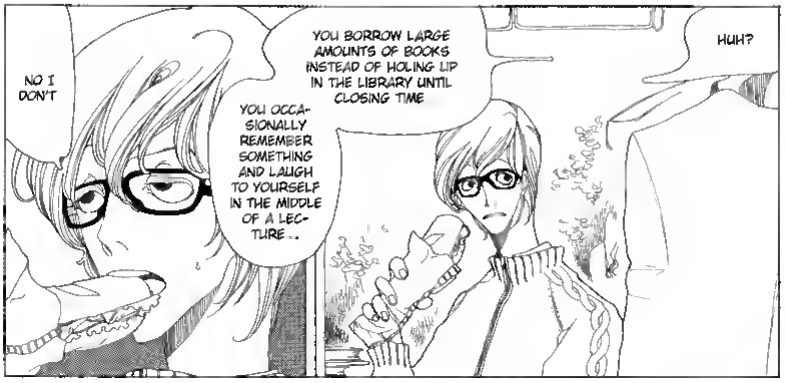

10
Journal

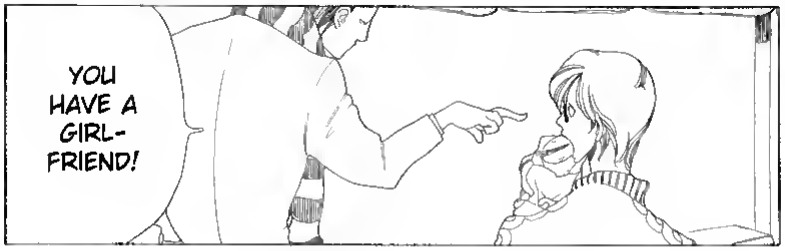

"EVENTUALLY, I'LL BREAK OFF FROM THE SWING"
"AND BECOME A CONSTELLATION".
MICHEL, IT'S GOING TO RAIN THIS AFTERNOON
"I'LL BECOME COPERNICUS' CONSTELLATION".


IF I SEE A DIARY LYING ABOUT, I JUST CAN'T HELP MYSELF...
SORRY, BUT IT WAS TOO MUCH OF A TEASE.
AAAAAH!
DON'T TOUCH PEOPLE'S STUFF WITHOUT ASKING!
Hey!
TAKEOOO!
I HAVE TO GO I'M GOING TO BE LATE
IT'S A NICE POEM!
"MICHEL" WAS YOUR LITTLE BROTHER, RIGHT?
SHUT UP. I'M DONE TALKING ABOUT IT.
TODAY'S SATUR-DAY,
SO THE SHOP CLOSES AROUND 2:00
AH!
REALLY?


2:00, RIGHT?
YEAH
THEN I'LL PICK YOU UP.
HM?
FIRST THING IN THE MORNING AND YOU ALREADY SMELL NICE.


IT SURE IS QUIET FOR A SATURDAY
HEY.
AH!
EH?
AAAAND
LOOKS LIKE IT'S GONNA RAIN,
SO WE'RE CLOSIN' UP EARLY TODAY
I WONDER WHAT I DID WITH THE FLYER?
THAT CIRCUS IS OPEN ALL THIS MONTH, RIGHT?
AH, THAT REMINDS ME...
HEY, ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING?
TODAY'S TOPIC IS...
"RUMORS SURROUNDING THE BRILLIANT SCHOLAR MICHEL BOHRINGER"


NO I DON'T
YOU OCCASIONALLY REMEMBER SOMETHING AND LAUGH TO YOURSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF A LECTURE..
YOU BORROW LARGE AMOUNTS OF BOOKS INSTEAD OF HOLING UP IN THE LIBRARY UNTIL CLOSING TIME
HUH?


YOU HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND!


...I WOULDN'T SAY.
WE'RE LOVERS QUITE YET...
SAID THAT, DIDN'T HE.
THAT'S THE GIST.
As rumor has it


I'M SURE.
THERE'S A PLACE I WANT TO STOP BY
THANKS
I'M HEADED YOUR WAY YOU SHOULD RIDE WITH ME
ARE YOU SURE?
PIZZA
EMA
GLOIRE
A EMPORTER


19TH ARRONDISSEMENT OF PARIS.
PLACE DE STALINGRAD
LINE 5 OF THE PARIS METRO
AT EITHER JAURES STATION
OR STALINGRAD STATION
Marx
Stalingr
Jacques Bonsergent


TICKET SALES OPEN FROM 3:00 TO 7:00.
SHOW STARTS AT 6:30.
PER-FORMANCES HELD EVERY WEDNESDAY, SATURDAY, AND SUN-DAY.
Fermé
PARIS 19 eme


..GOR-
GEOUS,
ISN'T IT,
BRO?
HOW
MANY
YEARS
HAS IT
BEEN
SINCE
YOU'VE
SEEN A
CIRCUS
TENT?
I..
CAN'T..


!!
SEE IT THROUGH THE RAIN ...!
SORRY I DIDN'T MEAN TO SCARE YOU LIKE THAT..
THE RESTAURANT WAS ALREADY CLOSED AND YOU WEREN'T THERE
SORRY BUT...
MI-
CHEL..


NO!
YOU MISS THE CIRCUS AFTER ALL...
THAT'S A CIRCUS TENT, ISN'T IT?
HOW DID YOU KNOW...?
NO.
HEY LET'S GO HOME ALREADY


I WANT TO BE THE ONE TO FUCK YOU TODAY
SAY...
EH?
HAAH
MM
WAIT
DO YOU GET TO JUST DECIDE LIKE THAT?
OF COURSE
I'M OLDER THAN YOU ARE


NICE AND SLOW...
ALRIGHT?
I'LL TAKE IT SLOW.
ONLY BY ONE YEAR.
WAH!
URK.
N-
RELAX.
UUU!
UU
UU
UUU
DON'T BE SO NERVOUS.
UUU.


N-
NO.
I CAN'T DO IT
THIS IS HUMILIATING
WELL THEN,
HUH?
LET ME SHOW YOU REAL HUMILIA...
NO!
HUH?!
I WANT TO GIVE IT ANOTHER TRY SOMETIME


YOU WERE DOING SO GOOD FOR A WHILE
YOUR INNOCENCE WAS ADO-RABLE. .
HEY
GIVE IT UP. .
NO WAY.
I'M ONLY ONE YEAR...
LIKE I SAID BEFORE,
COULD YOU STOP TREATING ME LIKE A CHILD?


YOU'RE GETTING ME WET.
I CAN'T WIN...
AAAAH.
NOT "HM".
MOVE
HM?
Ring ring ring ring ring

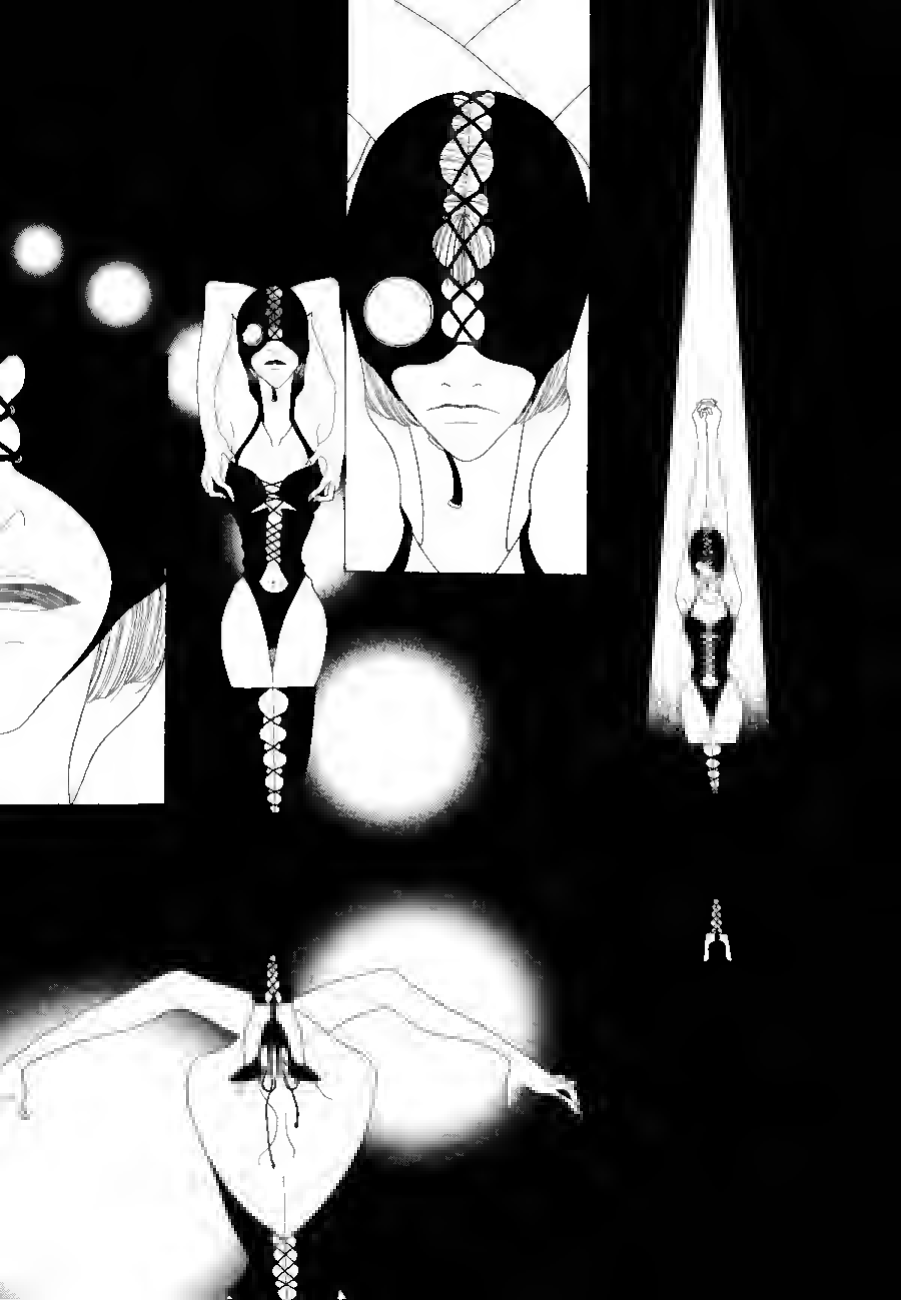

COCO...
MICHEL.
YES?
THIS ISN'T EXACTLY THE FIRST TIME.
SHE SLIT HER WRISTS.

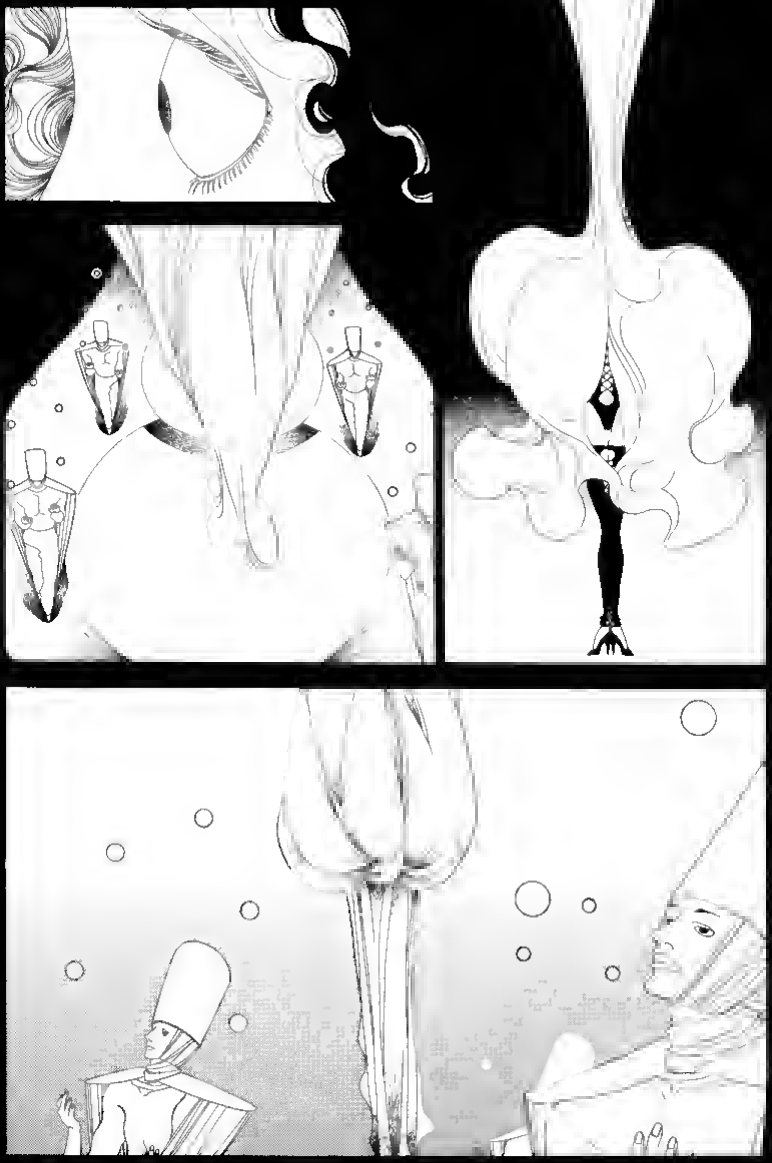

THANKS
TAKE THIS ONE INSTEAD.
THAT JACKET IS TOO LIGHT...
MICHEL...
BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE THE CUTS WERE DEEPER THIS TIME AROUND.
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.


NOW'S YOUR CHANCE.
THE SHOW STARTS IN THIRTY MINUTES.
YOU CAN STILL MAKE IT IF YOU RUN.













[End of chapter 10]


II


Copernic nespire
Avancait Saint
journal
Michel
SAINT
IMBECILES
ring ring ring ring ring ring
YES?
How's Coco?
RIGHT
SORRY
SORRY, I WAS ASLEEP
I didn't hear it
IT WASN'T TOO SERIOUS
BUT THE DOCTORS WANT TO MONITOR HER CONDITION FOR 2 OR 3 DAYS
SO I THINK I'LL STAY HERE...
UNTIL THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW AROUND THE 16TH
YEAH...
THE PHONE?
This evening...?
AH
MICHEL
Eh?


I WANT...
AH
SORRY, MICHEL
VIENT
to see you.
I HAVE PLANS
SORRY.
I'M SORRY...
THESE ROSES
DON'T SEEM TO BE ABSORBING WATER VERY WELL.


SHOULD I CUT THE ENDS AGAIN?
WELL?
COCO?
THROW THEM OUT
EH?
.....
NOTHING
NEVER-MIND
GOOD IDEA
REARRANGE THEM FOR ME
.....
IT'LL BE FINE.


silen
sychanalyste
Dr. Yves Carsoux
HE'S A HIGHLY RESPECTED, WELL-KNOWN DOCTOR
THIS WAY, PLEASE
MADAME CONAGI
SORRY FOR THE WAIT,
I SEE
I'LL COME BACK AS SOON AS I'M DONE WITH WORK, AND WAIT FOR YOU OUT HERE
THAT'LL BE ALL FOR TODAY
YOU SHOULD TRY DISCUSSING YOUR FEELINGS AT HOME, AS WELL
I WILL
...I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOUR HUSBAND SOMETIME, TOO
ANDRE
ANDRE?
SHOW HER OUT
AH
IT'S FINE I KNOW THE WAY OUT


THANK YOU
FOR TODAY
WE CAN'T
I HAVE TO GO...
W-C
AH!
AND SO DO YOU
MM.
I CAN JUST SAY WORK TOOK LONGER THAN I EXPECTED
AH
ANDRE, HUH...?
HEHE
THAT'S A CUTE NAME...
AH!


IS THIS REALLY WHAT YOU WANT?
I DO MY BEST TO COVER FOR YOU
THE ONE YOU REALLY LOVE
IS THAT SWEET BOY WHO SHARES YOUR BLOOD, RIGHT?
WE'RE BOTH DEPRAVED...
WE COULD STILL MAKE A GOOD COUPLE...
I THOUGHT
IN YOUR CASE,
SO I WOULDN'T TAINT HIM...
I TRIED TO LOVE SOMEONE MORE THAN I LOVE MICHEL.
THAT'S WHY...


I COULD LOVE YOU ...
YOU'LL CATCH A COLD DRESSED AS LIGHTLY AS YOU ARE
'K?
YOU CAME TO SEE US YESTERDAY TOO, HUH


YOU STICK OUT, SO I REMEMBER
YOU WERE ALONE BOTH TODAY AND YESTERDAY,
AND YOU SAT IN YOUR SEAT UNTIL THE VEEERY END.
YOU MUST REALLY BE A FAN.
OR DO YOU HAVE SOME OTHER PURPOSE?
EH?
LUNE!
LUNE!


THAT VOICE ...
SORRY, I HAVE TO GO.
HEY
COME BACK IN ABOUT
AN HOUR
I'LL BE WAITING
LUNE!
HURRY UP AND GET OVER HERE!
WHAT IS IT? DID YOU PEE?
SHUT UP!


YOU'RE HOPELESS


snap
IT COULDN'T BE...
COULD IT...?
.....
I have...
plans...


I'm sorry.
Sorry, Michel.
AT THIS HOUR...?
WHY DID HE
snap
APOLO-GIZE SO MUCH...?
snap
YOU SHOU-LDN'T TREAT THOSE ROSES SO ROUGHLY.
THEY'RE MY ROSES.


...
O-...
WANT SOME HOT COCOA?
THERE'S ALCOHOL IN IT, SO IT'LL WARM YOU RIGHT UP.
THANKS
...UM


HUH?
YOU KNOW OUR RING-MASTER?
HE'S MY HUSBAND
!
I SEE
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE A FAN OF HIS
EARLIER
WAS THAT AUGUSTE KIRILL-OV...?
HE SUFFERED FROM BRAIN FEVER 2 YEARS AGO,
AND BECAME PARA-LYZED
IN THE BOTTOM HALF OF HIS BODY.


HE WAS TOLD HE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO CONTINUE RUNNING THE CIRCUS,
AND PERFORMERS LEFT IN DROVES..
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
YOU COULD SAY I LET THE PROPER TIMING SLIP ME BY.
BUT DESPITE APPEARANCES, HE'S ALWAYS THINKING BUSINESS
THE RINGMASTER


ABOUT THE CIRCUS...
OONAGI ...
...
LONG TIME NO SEE,
MICHEL.


YOU'VE GROWN TALLER SINCE I LAST SAW YOU.
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
WHY, I'M HERE TO VISIT COCO.
THAT SHOULD GO WITHOUT SAYING.
WE MAY BE LIVING APART,
BUT I'M STILL HER HUSBAND.
PLEASE
STAY OUT OF HER LIFE.
LEAVE HER ALONE.
YOU'RE ONE OF HER WOUNDS.


A FESTERING WOUND!
DON'T MAKE IT ANY WORSE ...!
BUT SHE'S THE ONE
WHO NEEDS THE WOUND.
SHE'S IN LOVE WITH A CERTAIN SOMEONE.
IT'S A BITTER LOVE.
A LOVE THAT CANNOT BE PERMIT-TED
RATHER THAN ALLOWING HER TO MUTILATE HERSELF AS PUNISHMENT FOR HER OWN DEPRAVITY,
CAN'T YOU SEE HOW IT'S BETTER FOR HER TO EMBRACE THE WOUND THAT IS ME INSTEAD?
YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE
THAT THE LOVE SHE SEEKS IS IMPOSSIBLE, RIGHT?
NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY TO DECEIVE YOUR-SELF OTHER-WISE, SWEET MICHEL.


EXCUSE ME.


...THIS IS...
..SOMEONE ONCE SAID...
A JUGGLER
THE VERY SAME THING.
A CIRCUS PERFORMER?
YEAH
AKEO OHNAGI

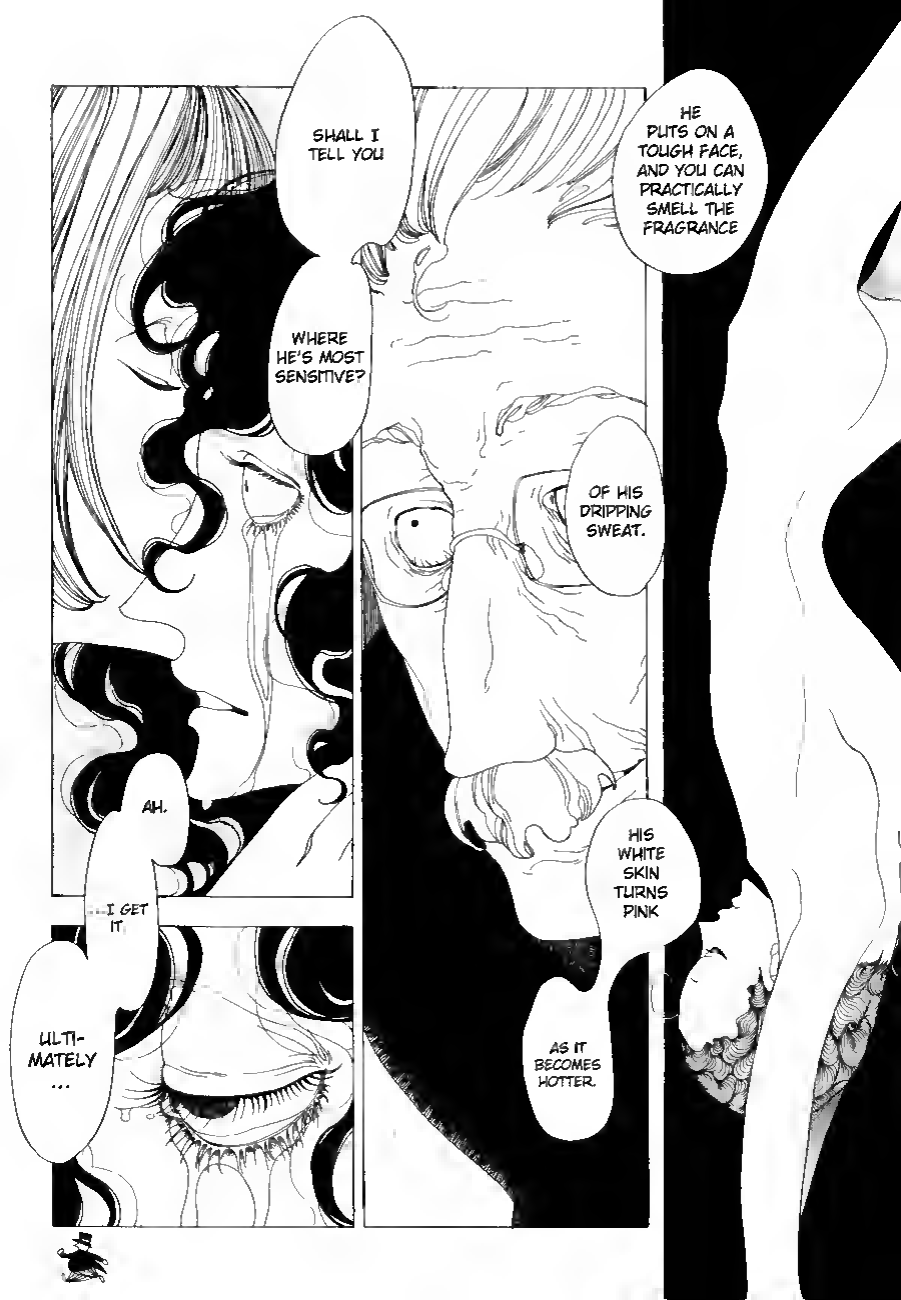

HE COULD JUGGLE 16 PINS.
WOW, AMAZING!
WHERE IS HE PERFORMING NOW?
...HMM.
I DON'T KNOW


DON'T KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT HIM..
I..
!
..I SHOULD'VE SAID!!
MORE ABOUT
WHAT I FE..

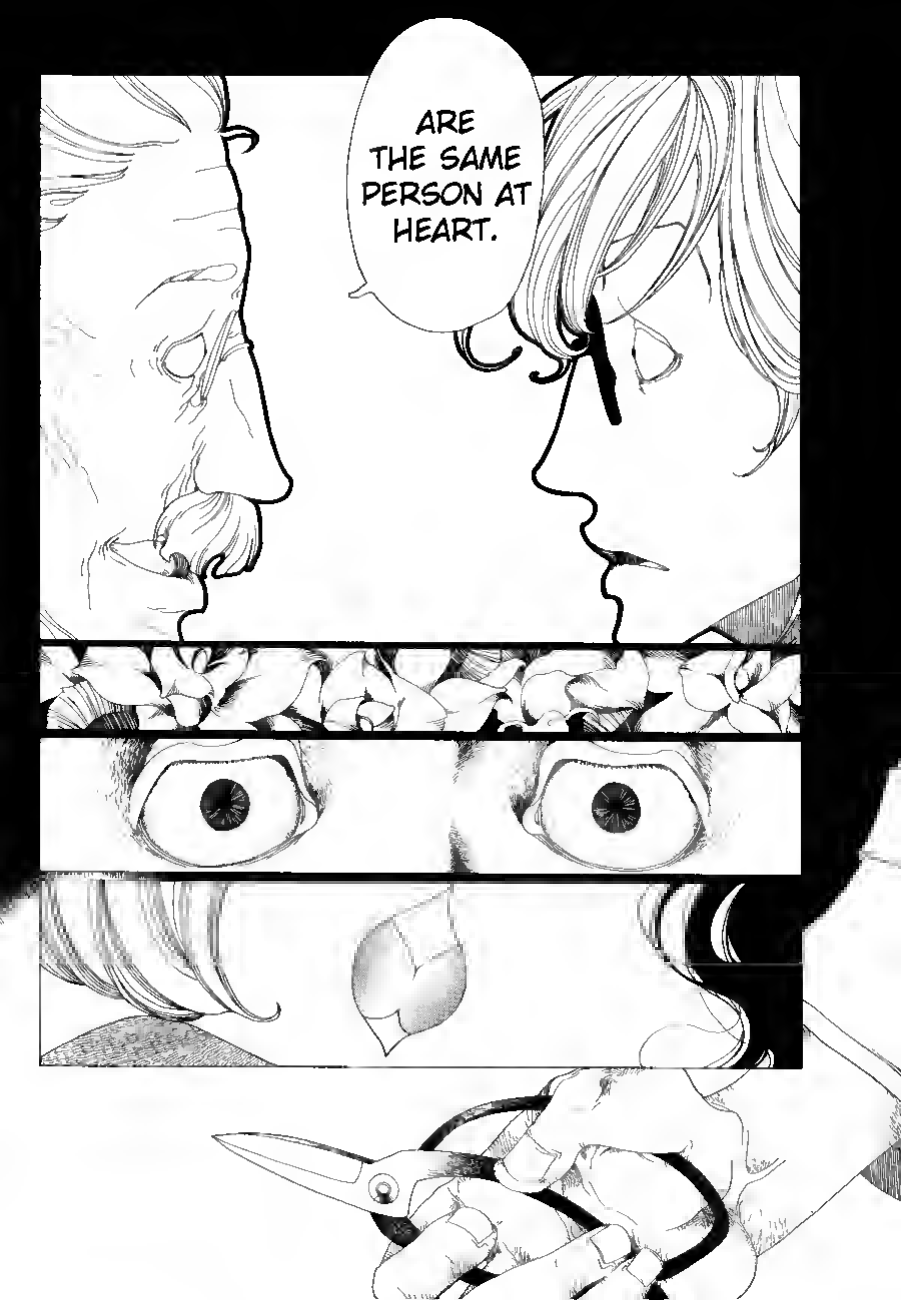

...THIS COAT...
IS TAKEO'S, ISN'T IT.


...I SEE.
YOU TWO STILL MEET.
SO?
IS HE WELL?
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
I'M LEAVING.
... HAVE YOU ALREADY


HAD SEX?
YOU HAVE.
HE'S GOOD, ISN'T HE.
THIN AND LIMBER.


HE PUTS ON A TOUGH FACE, AND YOU CAN PRACTICALLY SMELL THE FRAGRANCE
OF HIS DRIPPING SWEAT.
HIS WHITE SKIN TURNS PINK
AS IT BECOMES HOTTER.
SHALL I TELL YOU
WHERE HE'S MOST SENSITIVE?
AH.
...I GET IT
ULTI-MATELY ...


WE'VE GOT 2 PEOPLE
IN COMMON.
THERE'S NO DOUBT
YOU AND I


ARE
THE SAME
PERSON AT
HEART.


SMASH


HAH!
HAH!
HAAH


...SIGH.
...OOH...
SI...
GH...
OOAAH...!

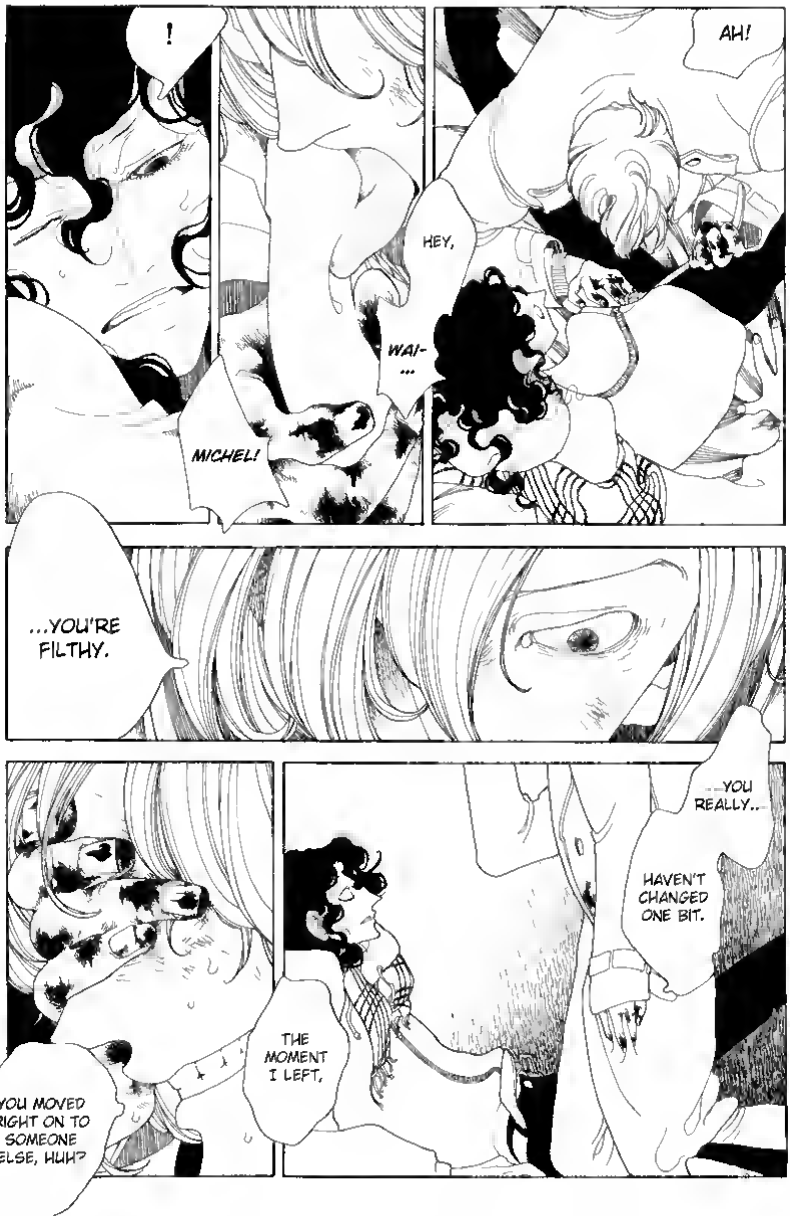
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BLOOD...?
SLICK
MICHEL?
YOU'RE BACK...?


WHY...
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN,
TAKEO?
EVERY NIGHT...
EVERY NIGHT...
UH...
UM...

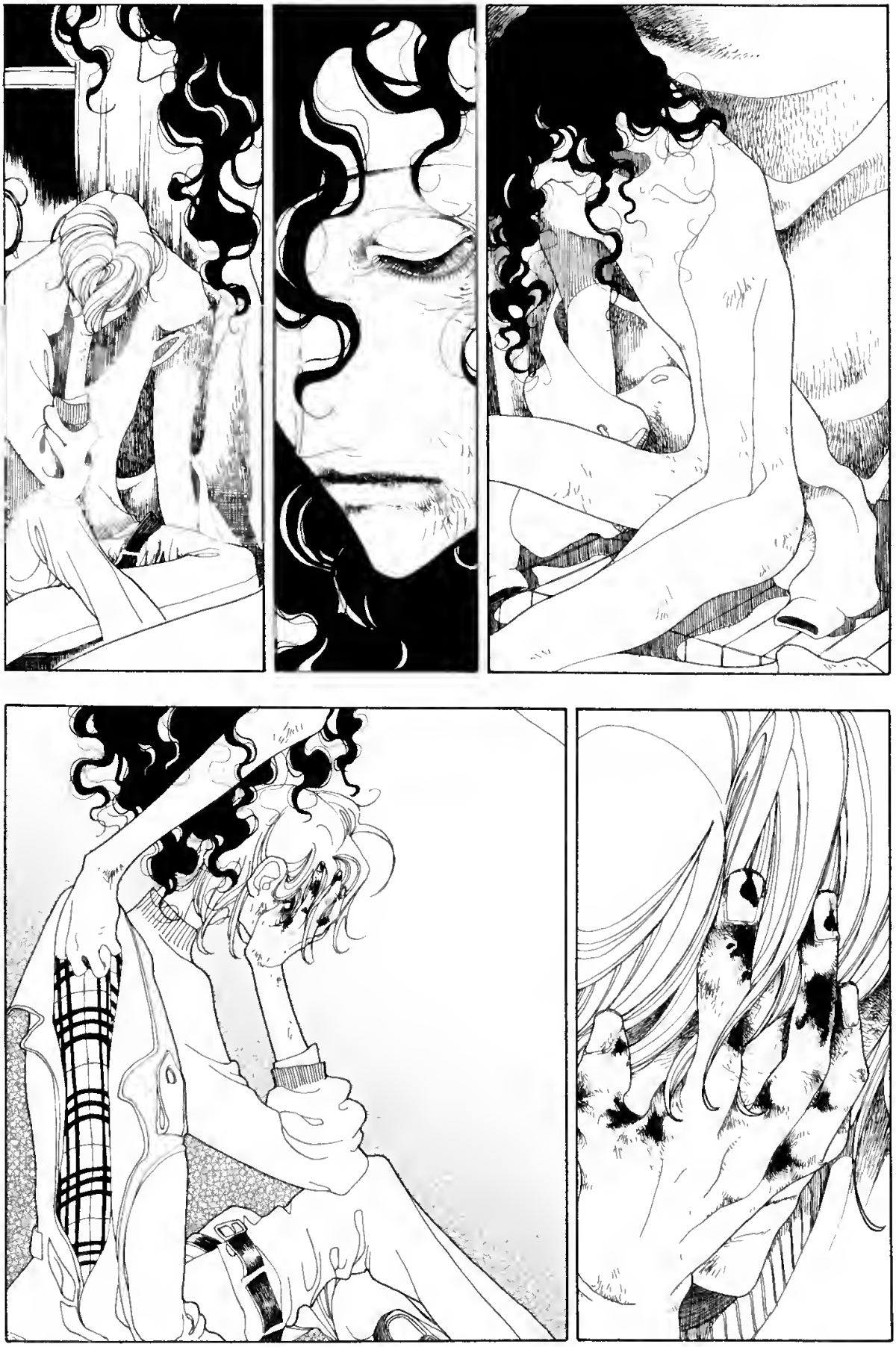

...YOU TASTE SWEET


!
AH!
HEY,
WAI-
...
MICHEL!
...YOU'RE FILTHY.
...YOU REALLY..
HAVEN'T CHANGED ONE BIT.
THE MOMENT I LEFT,
YOU MOVED RIGHT ON TO SOMEONE ELSE, HUH?

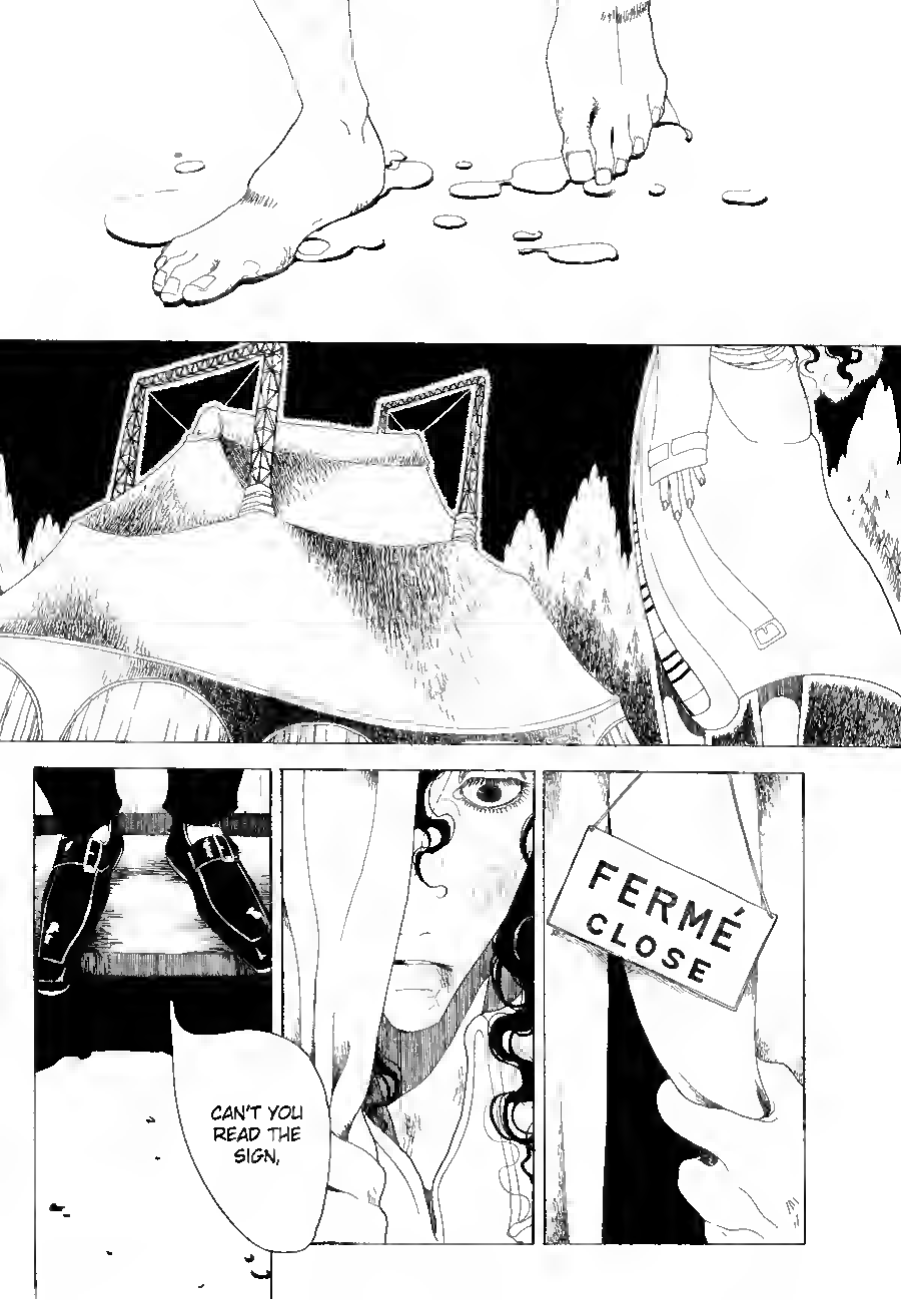

EX-
PLAIN IT
TO ME!
GO
ON, GIVE
ME AN
EXCUSE!
I...
I'M...
NOT
KIND
AT
ALL!
TELL
ME.
WHO WERE
YOU THINKING
ABOUT WHEN
YOU SLEPT
WITH ME?
I WASN'T
...
YOU'RE
...
JUST LIKE
COCO.


YOU ACT LIKE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO'S GETTING HURT...
WHAT, AREN'T YOU GOING TO FIGHT BACK?
UNGH!
YOU'RE SO FULL OF IT!
DO YOU FEEL SORRY FOR ME?
UNTIL ...
JUST RECENTLY...
I THOUGHT
YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY...
LOVE ME!
THAT'S NOT--


SHUT UP!!
I'VE
HAD ENOUGH
OF THIS...






FERMÉ
CLOSE
CAN'T YOU READ THE SIGN,


BIRD'S NEST?
AH...
HEH
I SEE YOU'RE STILL
PALE WITH SORROW,
WITH EMPTY EYES.
THEY SUIT YOU. THEY LOOK JUST LIKE

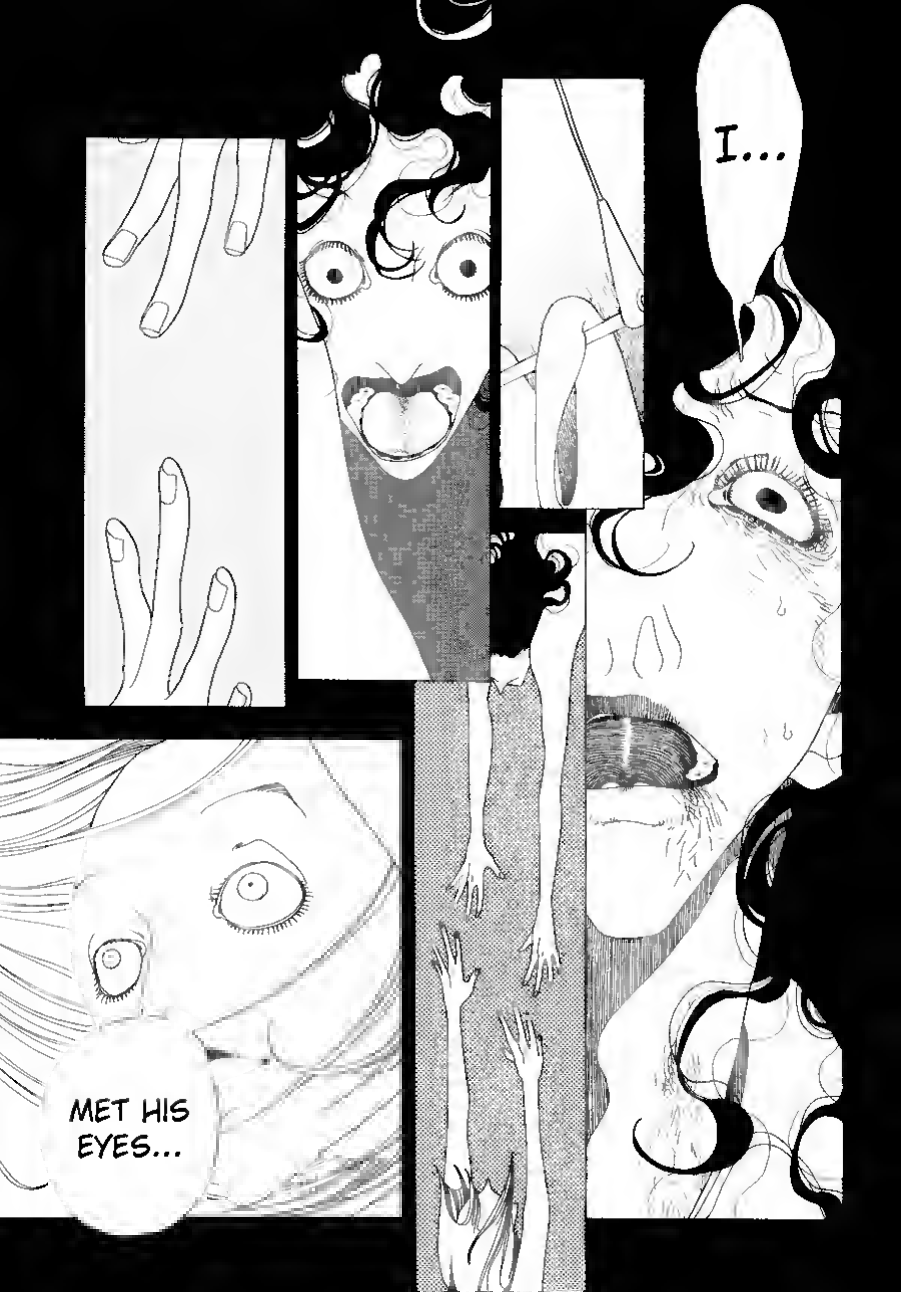

YOUR BROTHER'S DID THAT DAY.
YOU KNEW...
MY BROTHER?
...I
SAW HIM DIE.
THE CIRCUS YOU WERE WORKING FOR
WAS RIDDLED WITH DEBTS IT WAS ON THE VERGE OF BANKRUPTCY
SO I WENT TO SEE IF THERE WERE
ANY GOOD ARTISTS I COULD CLAIM


I KNEW THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT HIM
WHEN YOUR BROTHER APPEARED.
HE...
FOR SOME REASON I COULD SENSE
HIS IMPENDING DEATH.
I HAD A BAD FEELING ABOUT HIM.
HE WASN'T NERVOUS AT ALL.
IT WAS AS IF HE SAW NOTHING.


I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE HIM.
I...
SAID HE LOVED ME.
BUT I...
DIDN'T BELIEVE HIM.
I COULD NEVER
TRULY SMILE
WAS ALWAYS MISERABLE.
AL-WAYS
WITH HIM, AS BEAUTIFUL AS AN ANGEL,
BY MY SIDE,
OF MY MISERY,
AND THE MORE AWARE I WAS
THE WORSE IT BECAME
THAT'S WHY I--.


WAS TRYING TO FLEE FROM HIS LIGHT.
AND YET
HE LO-...
.....
I CAN'T ACCEPT THAT!
I CAN'T BEAR IT!
THAT'S WHY
I
PUSHED HIM AWAY ...
WHY DID HE HAVE TO..


AND KILLED HIM.
RIDICU-LOUS!
RUBBISH, THE LOT OF IT.
I TRIED TO GET AWAY
BEFORE MY SHADOW
COULD SWALLOW UP HIS LIGHT, BUT...
RIDICU-LOUS!
I KILLED HIM!
IT WAS AN ACCI-DENT.
IT WAS MUR-DER!


I...
MET HIS EYES...

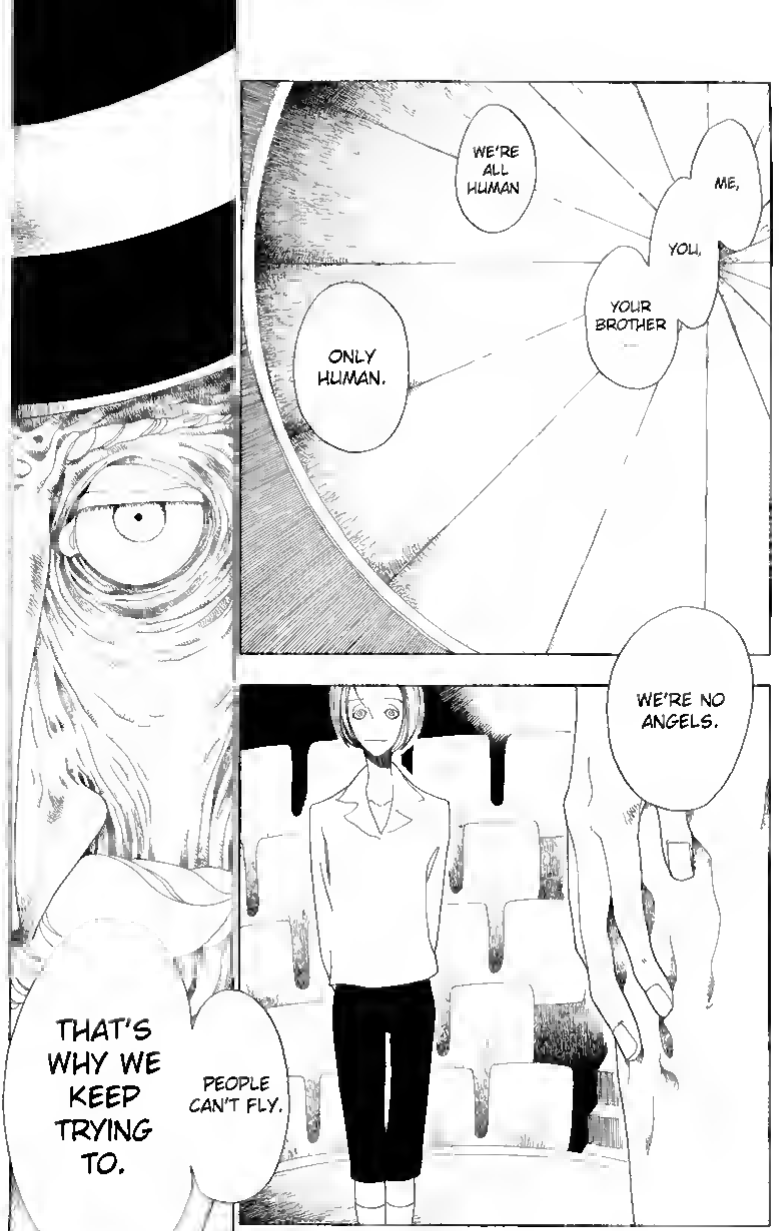

AND IN THAT MOMENT ...
FOR THE FIRST TIME, I REALIZED
THAT WE WERE MIRRORS FOR ONE ANOTHER
SO WHEN HE DIED
THE WHOLE WORLD GOT FLIPPED BACK-WARDS.


FLYING AND FALLING.
LIFE AND DEATH.
HEAVEN AND EARTH.
THE TWO OF US SWITCHED PLACES.
WHERE HE BECAME A CONSTELLATION.
COPERNICUS' CONSTELLATION.
SO NOW
I WAS THE ONE WHO FELL TO THE GROUND AND PERISHED.
"MICHEL"
IS STILL...
AND HE BECAME AN ANGEL... "MICHEL" ...
ASCENDED TO HEAVEN.


FLYING UP ABOVE
FOR-EVER
SWINGING ON THE TRAPEZE
FOR-EVER
HE'S DEAD.
HE'S BURIED IN THE FRE-EZING COLD GROUND
I'M THE ONE WHO DIED!
YOU'RE ALIVE!
I'M DEAD!!
I.
NOT "MI-CHEL."
I
DIED!


THEN COME BACK TO LIFE!!
...ARE YOU PLANNING TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE
RUNNING AROUND PRETENDING LIKE YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD?
I KNOW.
I DO KNOW.


I'M STILL LOOKING FOR THE LIGHT
I STILL WANT TO BE "MICHEL"
HMPH
YOU HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS
THAT NO MATTER HOW MUCH
I RUN
I CAN'T ESCAPE IT
I'LL NEVER GET AWAY FROM IT, NOT AS LONG AS I LIVE.
EVEN WHEN
I'M STAINED PITCH BLACK
WHO IS "MICHEL"?
DOES IT EVEN MATTER?


WE'RE ALL HUMAN
ME,
YOU,
YOUR BROTHER
ONLY HUMAN.
WE'RE NO ANGELS.
PEOPLE CAN'T FLY.
THAT'S WHY WE KEEP TRYING TO.


...SO,
BIRD'S NEST,
I'VE BEEN PONDERING THAT ALL THESE YEARS...
WHAT IS A CIRCUS?
MY
ENTIRE LIFE, IN FACT.
THE CIRCUS IS MY LIFE.
SO I'VE BEEN WONDER-ING.
WHAT *IS* IT?


IT ISN'T THEATER,
OR DANCE,
OR STREET PERFORMANCE.
IT IS A SPECTACLE THAT UNFOLDS IN A SINGLE RING.
A WORLD APART, ONLY FOUND WITHIN ITS TENT.
PEOPLE FLY,
TIGERS LEAP,
ELEPHANTS TRUMPET...
IT IS AN ESCAPE FROM REALITY.


THE PARADOX OF REALITY AND UNREALITY...
THE AUDIENCE CAN FORGET REALITY
AND JOURNEY INTO A DREAM-WORLD.
AND THEIR GUIDES INTO THAT WORLD
ARE US,
THE ARTISTS.
THOSE WHO CAN PASS BETWEEN REALITY AND UNREALITY.

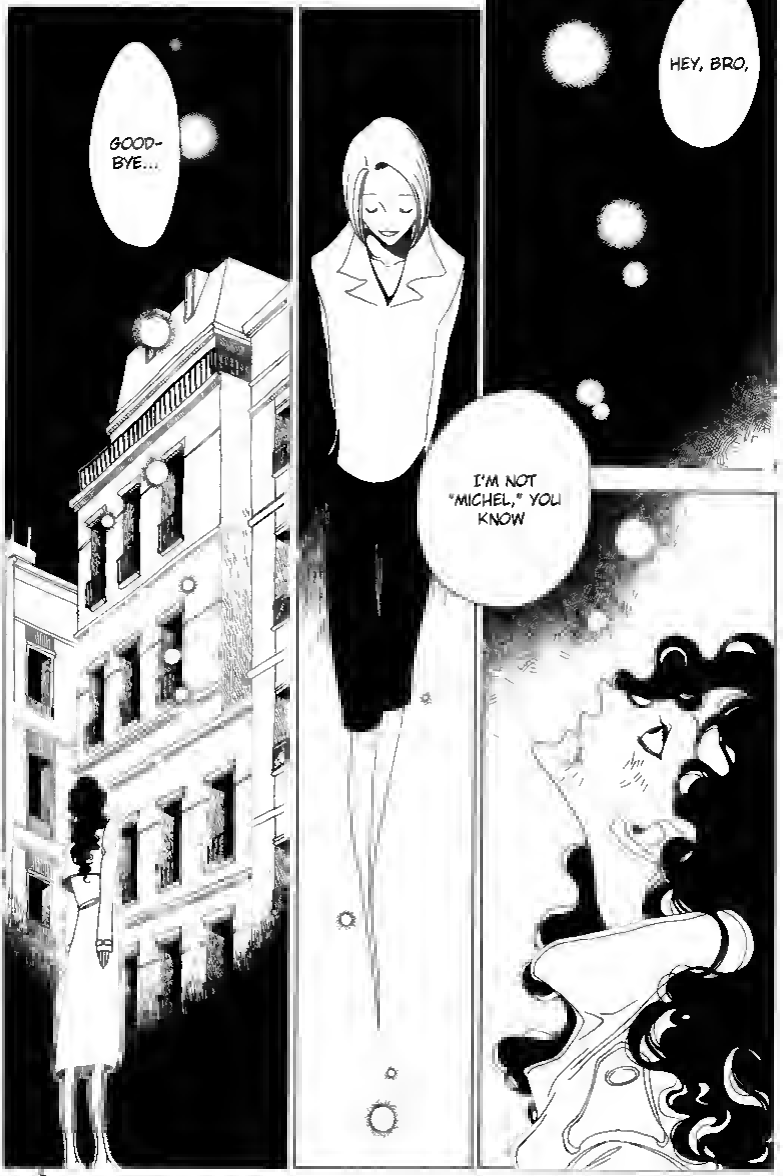

THAT IS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ARTIST.
IF YOU LET GO OF THE TRAPEZE,
YOU CANNOT FLY.
YOU
SIMPLY "DIE."
SIM-PLY
DIE.


YES.
YOU KNOW THIS ALREADY.
THE ONLY THING
YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT IS TO GRIEVE...


A LONG NIGHT.
THE SUN IS RISING.
...WAY BACK WHEN,
I USED TO CRAWL INTO BED WITH YOU WHEN IT GOT COLD,
DIDN'T I?
DID YOU HATE..
YES.
IT'S COLD OUT, ISN'T IT?


ME?
I ALWAYS ENVIED YOU
I WANTED TO BE YOU
I... I LOVED YOU
VERY, VERY MUCH


ENOUGH NOW...
I'VE...
HAD...
HEHE.
...I'M GLAD.


HEY, BRO,
I'M NOT "MICHEL," YOU KNOW
GOOD-BYE...

...FARE-
WELL...

La finale




TAKEO...?

STOP IT
I—


YOU'RE LEAVING?
.....
I'VE BEEN LYING TO YOU ALL THIS TIME.
"MICHEL" WASN'T MY BROTHER.


IT'S ME.
I WAS THE ONE WHO WROTE THAT POEM.
.....
SIX YEARS AGO,
MY BROTHER FELL TO HIS DEATH


AND I WAS SCARED.
AS HE FELL,
I SAW MYSELF REFLECTED IN HIS EYES.
GETTING SMALLER ...
AND SMALLER ...
IT FELT LIKE I WAS THE ONE WHO WAS FALLING.
I STARTED TO THINK THAT MAYBE I REALLY HAD.
THAT MY BROTHER HAD ASCENDED TO HEAVEN
AND I HAD PLUMMETED TO MY DEATH


A TRAPEZE ARTIST WHO CAN'T FLY IS AS GOOD AS DEAD.
AND I WAS TOO SCARED TO FLY.
...SO I WAS DEAD.
MICHEL THE TRAPEZE ARTIST WAS DEAD
I HAD NO NAME ANYMORE
MICHEL
W..S...


I THOUGHT I HAD THROWN IT ALL AWAY...
THAT NAME...
THE CIRCUS,
THE TRAPEZE,
BUT THE TRUTH WAS...
I WAS JUST
RUNNING AWAY, BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID OF DYING...
LIKE HIM...


BUT...
I WAS SCARED TO DIE.
BUT
THAT'S ALL OVER NOW.
YOU CAN
FLY AGAIN...
AND
YOU...

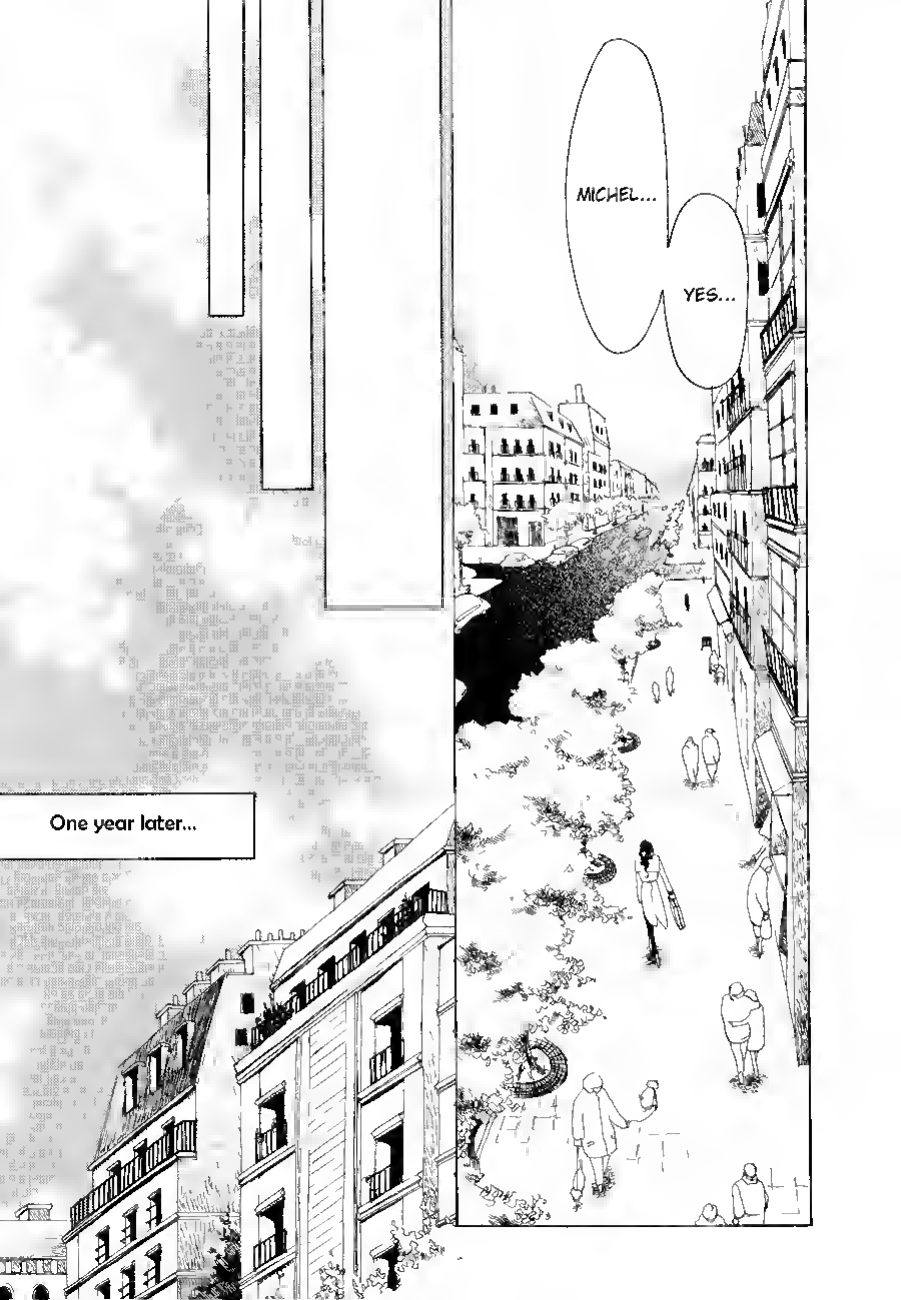

DON'T NEED ME ANYMORE. YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS MICHEL.
MICHEL, NO—
IT'S FINE.
DON'T WORRY.
DON'T THINK THAT I'M...
IT'S FINE, REALLY.

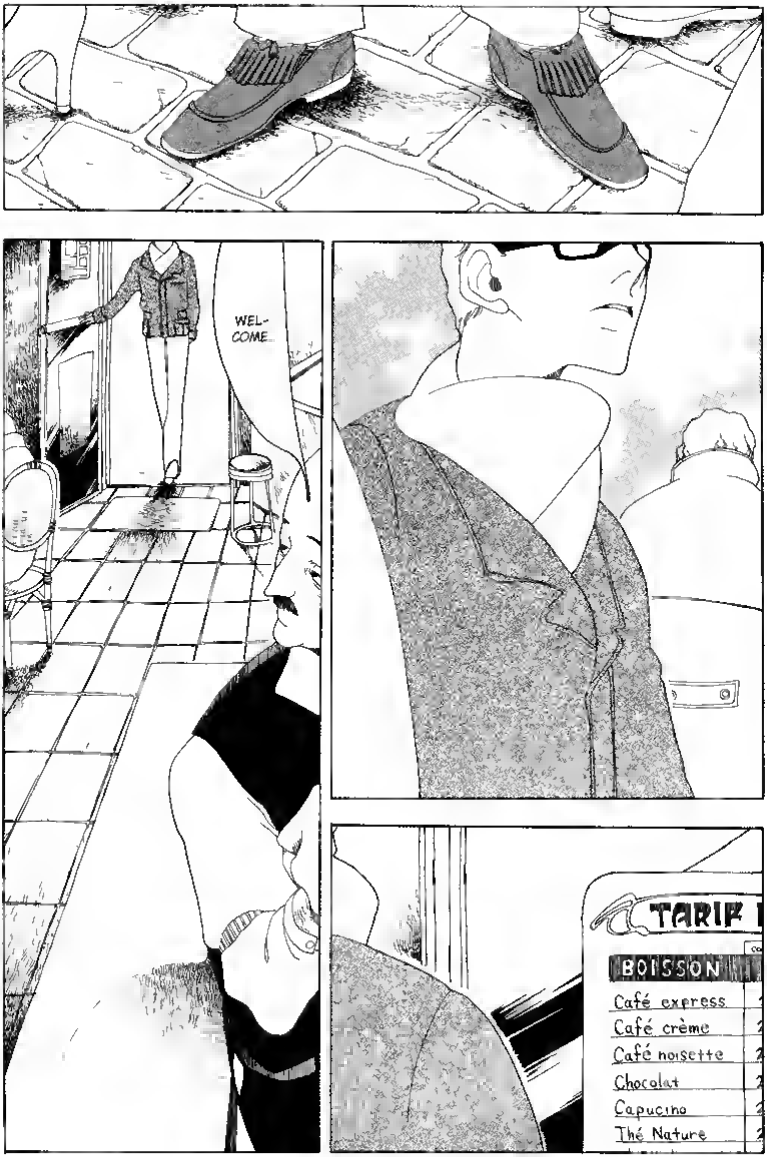

I'M NOT SAYING THIS BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER.
BUT I
STILL
CAN'T PULL OFF
A PROPER SMILE,
SO...
SO...
COULD YOU...


JUST GO?
PLEASE GO.
...ALL RIGHT...

SEE YOU ...
THUD
DON'T CRY.


I STABBED SOMEONE
I'D LIKE TO TURN MYSELF IN
MY NAME IS BOHRINGER.
DON'T YOU DARE.
DON'T CRY!
Hello, you've reached the Paris police
...YES
.....

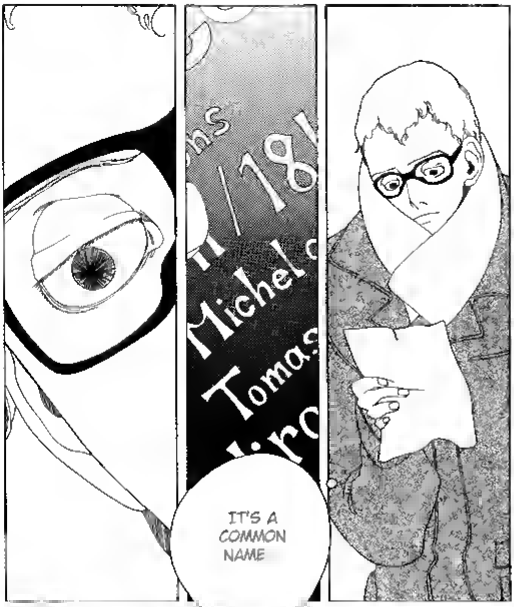

MICHEL...
YES...
One year later...


WEL-
COME
TARIF
BOISSON
Café express
Café crème
Café noisette
Chocolat
Capucino
Thé Nature


HELLO.
I'LL HAVE A GLASS OF RED
YOU GOT IT.
AWFULLY SHORT, ISN'T IT?
PARDON?
YOUR HAIR.
IS THAT THE NEW TREND?
OH
I'M
STARTING A NEW LIFE, SO...
TYING THE KNOT?
HAHA
I WISH!
OH,
MIND IF I USE YOUR PHONE?

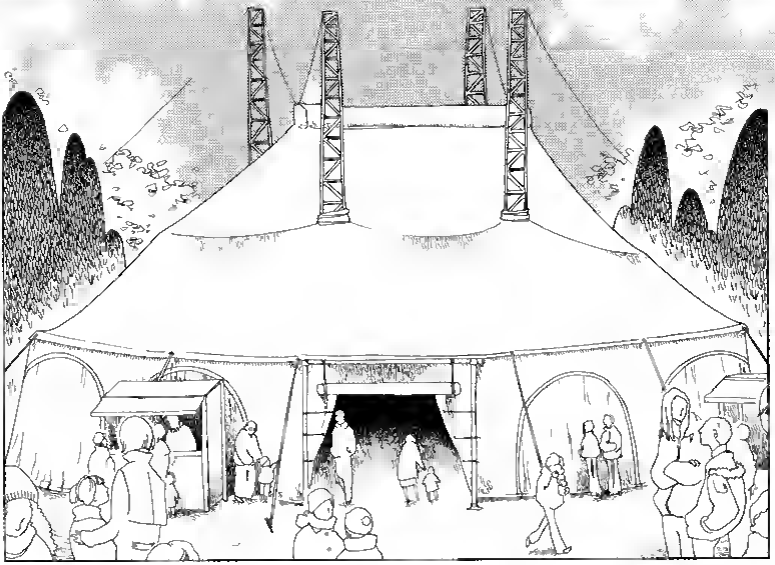

I'M OUT
HELLO,
COCO?
click
/ 18h30
HAHA
DON'T CRY
I'M IN THE CITY
YEAH
SORRY I MADE YOU WORRY ABOUT ME
THIS PAST YEAR

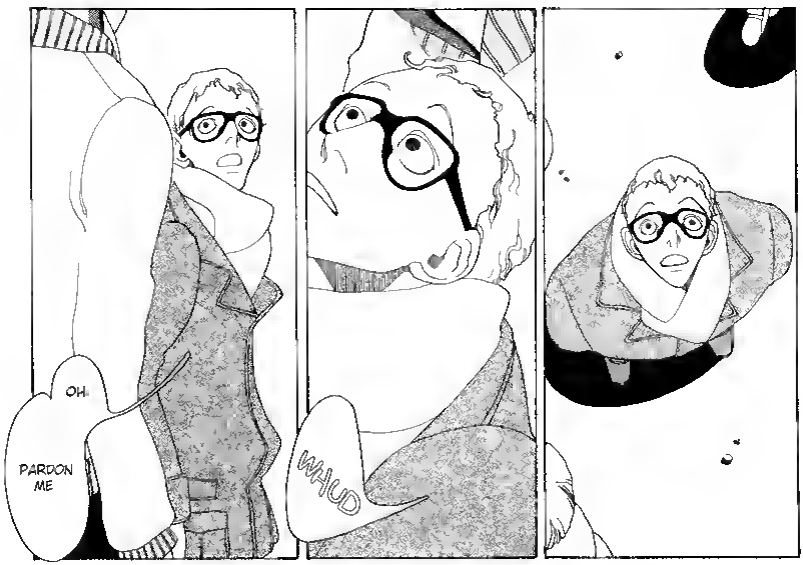

I MIGHT BE A LITTLE WHILE
YEAH
I WANT TO TAKE IN SOME FRESH AIR AS A FREE MAN—
I'LL BE RIGHT
HAHA
Bois de Boulogne
Mer Sam. Dim
YEAH.
SEE YOU SOON
OH!
ACTUALLY


IT'S A COMMON NAME

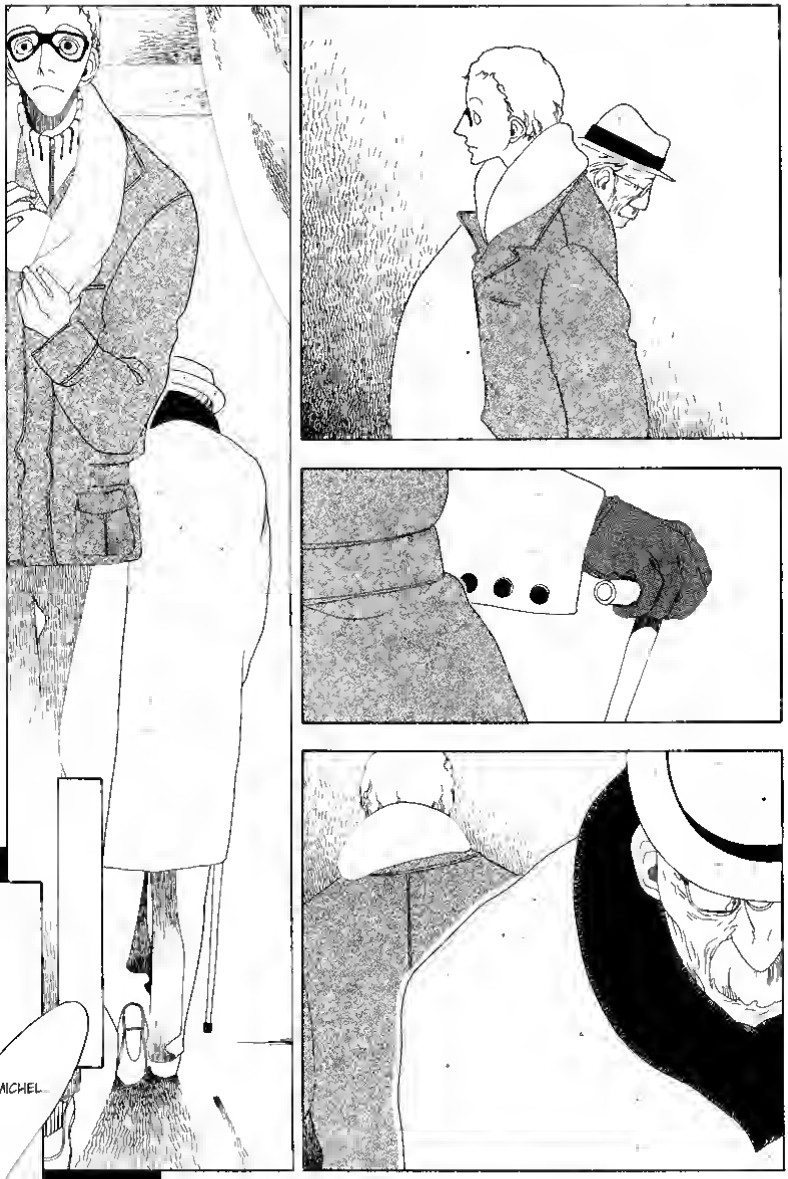







OH
PARDON ME
WHUD


HE'S A GIANT
YOU FOOL!
I TOLD YOU NOT TO GET THE CARAMEL CORN!
NO, EXCUSE ME
DO YOU WANT OUR DAUGHTER'S TEETH TO FALL OUT?!
TH-
THIS WAS ALL THEY HAD
THEN YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE BOUGHT ANYTHING!!


MICHEL...

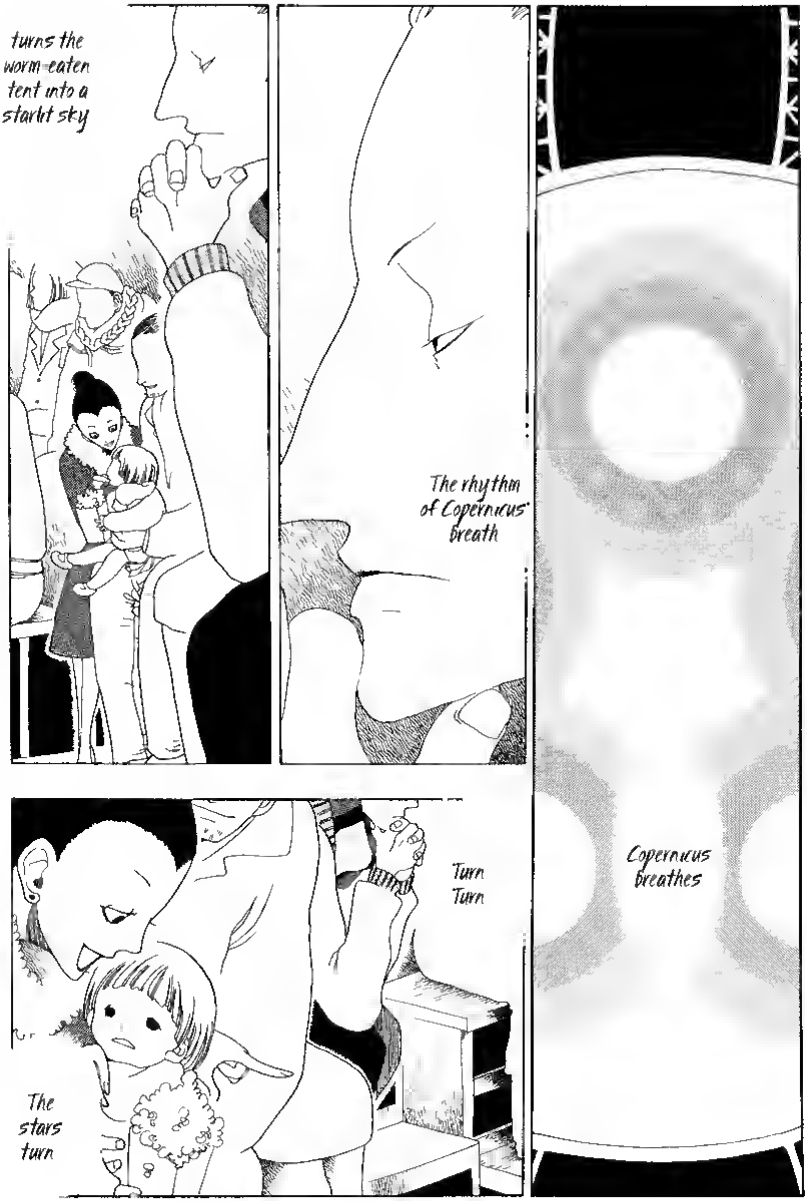

MICHEL.
MICHEL!
YOU HAVE A CALL.
IT'S LUNE.
SHE'S AT THE HOS-PITAL


ephone
HELLO?
Michel?
He's ...
It just happened.
he's dead.


Lune,
can you make it back in time to go on?
I...
I can't.
How could you even...
COME BACK.


WE NEED TO GIVE HIM A PROPER SEND-OFF.


Copernicus breathes.
The brave fool who advanced a model of the Earth's movement
developed a magnificent idea.
was regarded as insane.
and then died


turns the worm-eaten tent into a starlit sky
The rhythm of Copernicus' breath
Copernicus breathes
Turn Turn
The stars turn


In accordance with Copernicus' breath,
I fly
I fly freely
through Copernicus' starlit sky

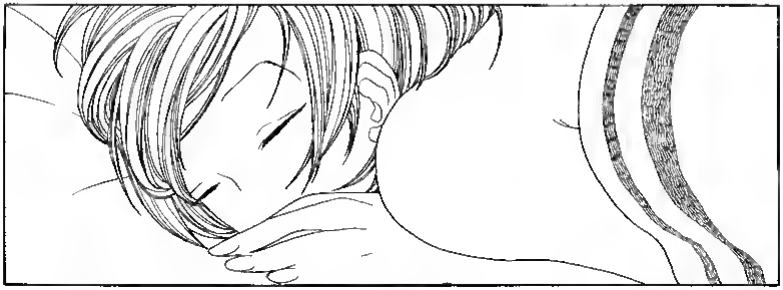

STARS
...
Eventually, I'll break off from the swing
...
AH...
and become a constellation

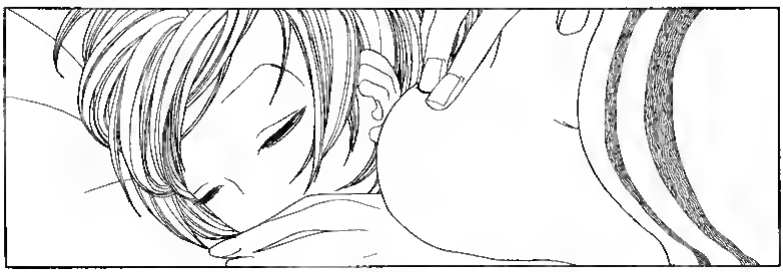
I'll become Copernicus'
constellation.

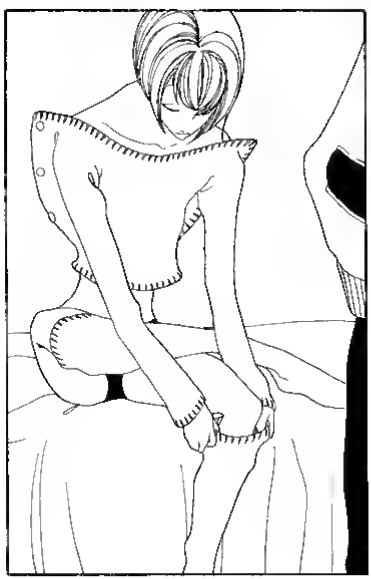


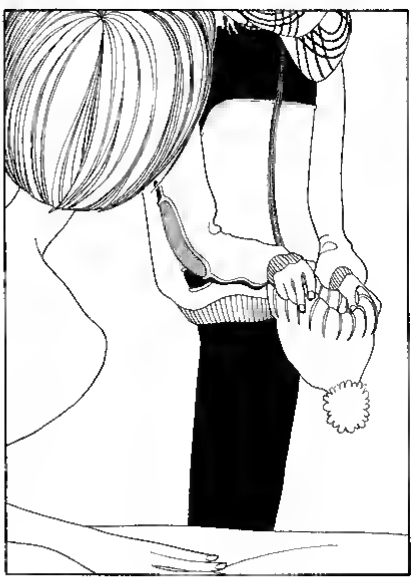


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A circus defies gravity

Soaring through the air on
ropes, hoops, and swings
Juggling countless rings,
balls, and clubs
Lifting people by their hands
Creating the most beautiful
forms

The ability to make the
impossible possible
To push their bodies
to the absolute limit
Their sweat dripping
The vapor of their
breath gleaming

They don't even
need illusion to
utterly intoxicate
their audience





This was my first series, and
many people offered me support
and encouragement

My editor,
first and foremost
Ueno Kouji
Ohta Publishing
My family,
Sugimoto Chika,
and countless other
friends

My utmost gratitude to all
of you readers out there
I wish you happiness

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